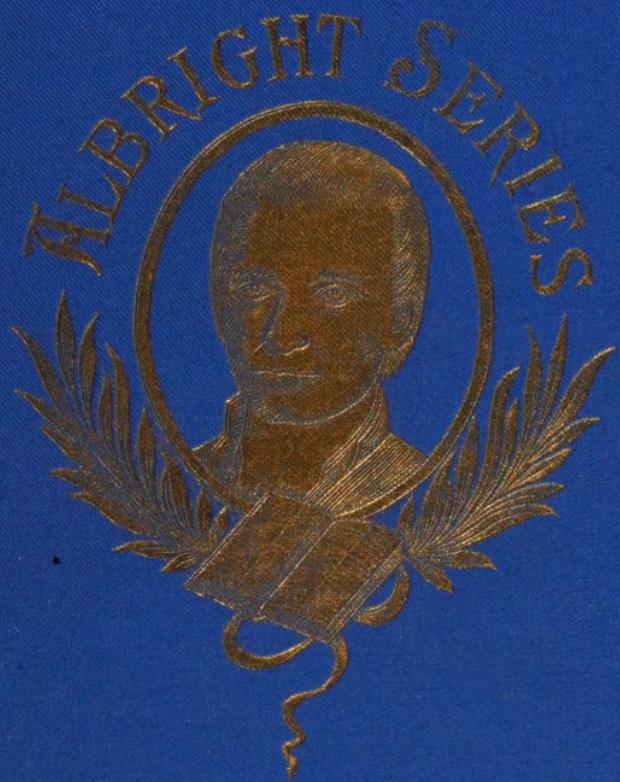


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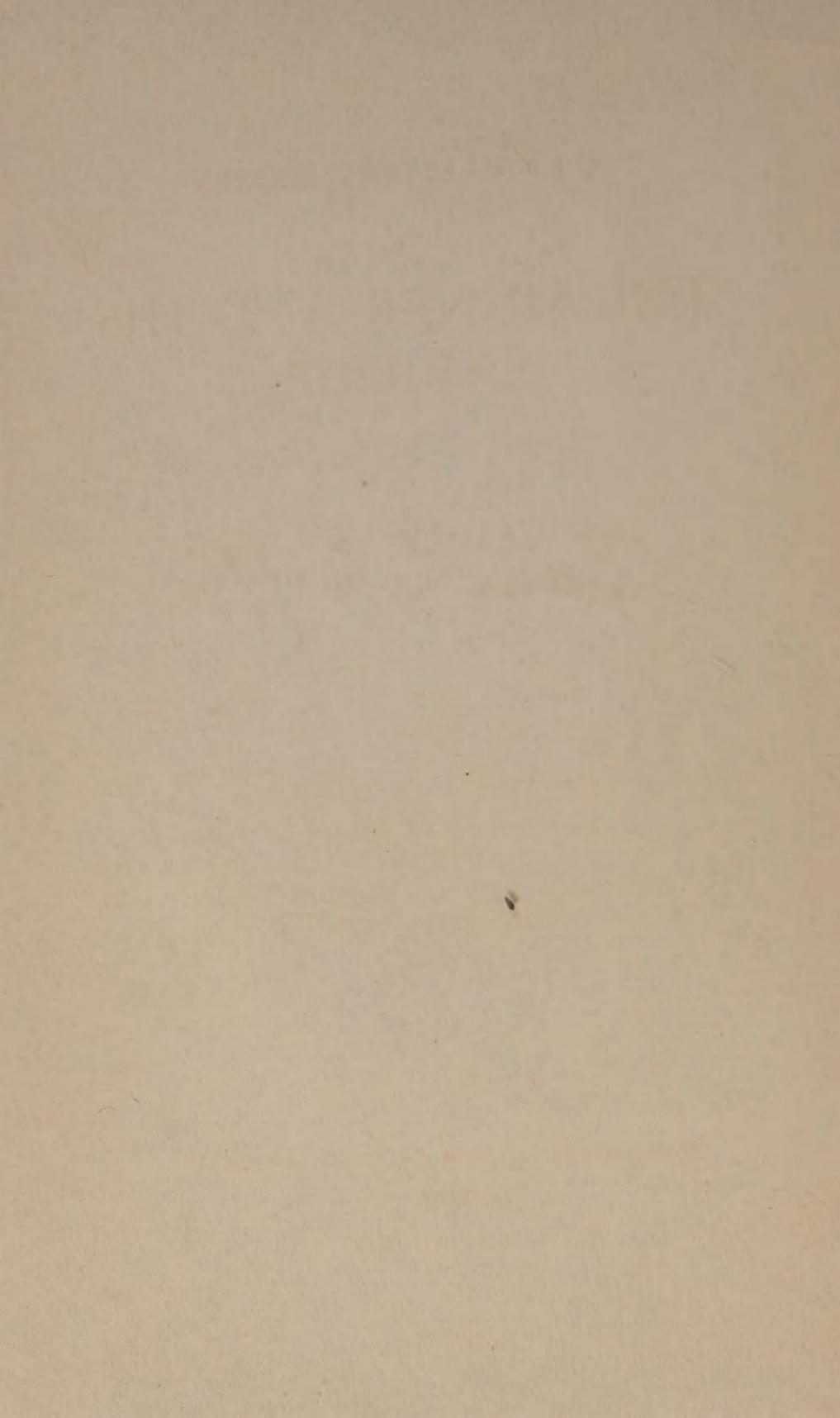




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The Albright Series

**THE SINNER AND HIS
SAVIOUR**

**THE WAY OF SALVATION
MADE PLAIN**

BY

SAMUEL P. SPRENG, D. D.,

**EDITOR OF "THE EVANGELICAL
MESSENGER."**

**AUTHOR OF "LIFE AND LABORS OF BISHOP
JOHN SEYBERT," ETC.,**

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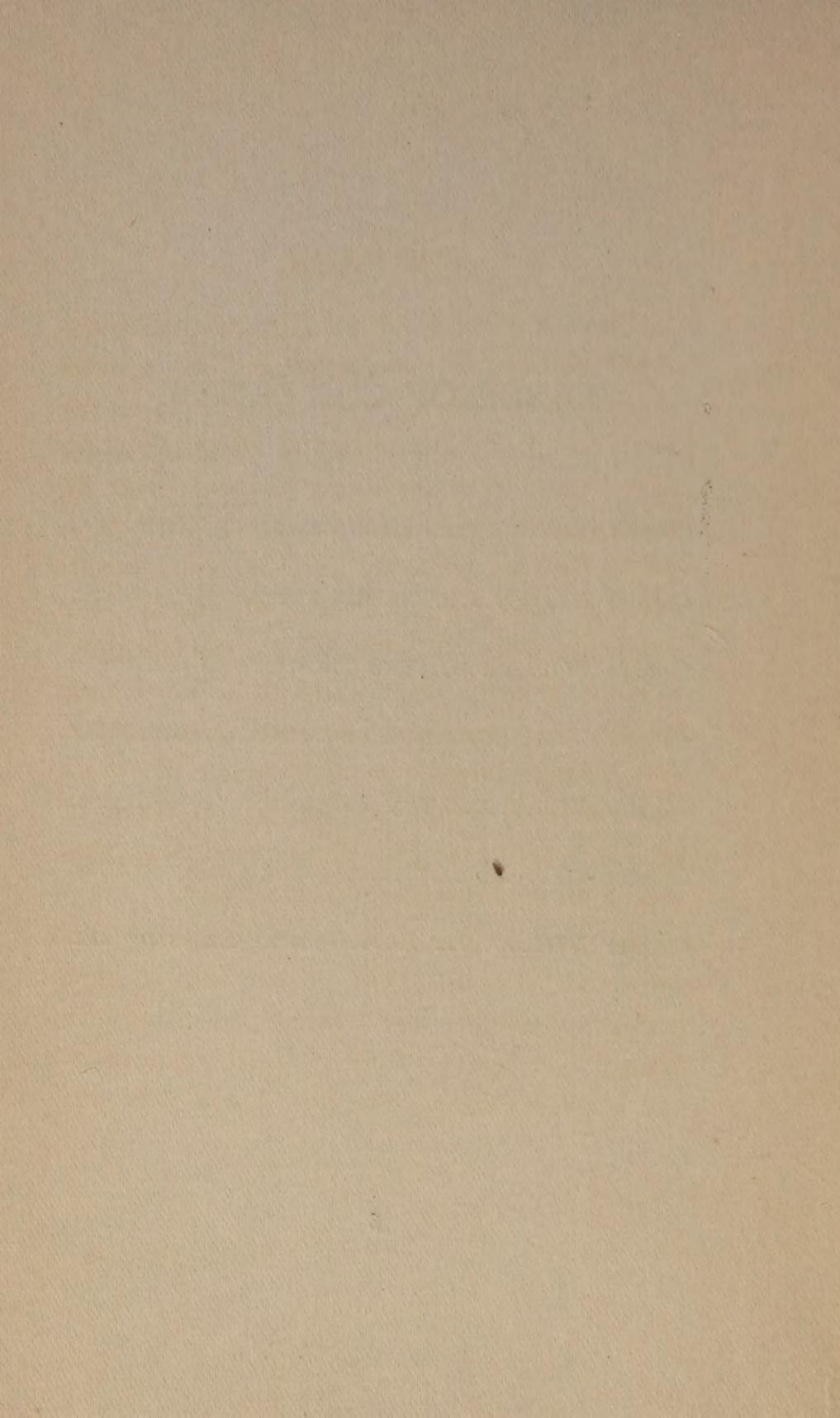
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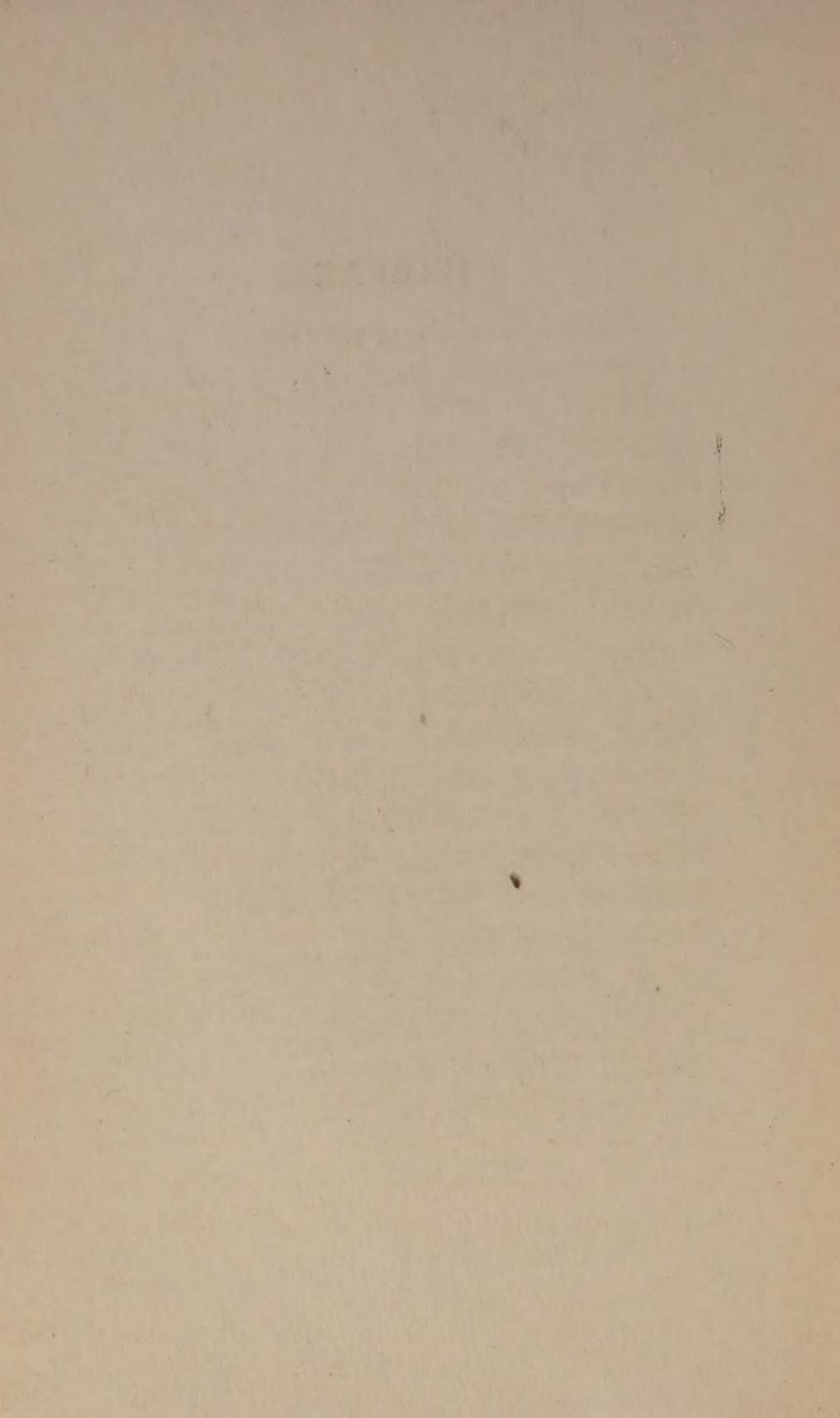
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PREFACE.

Under a provision of the General Conference of the Evangelical Association, in 1903, a series of books is projected, which is to set forth the doctrines, polity and genius of the Evangelical Association. The books are to be written by various authors in our Church, and will, it is hoped, form a nucleus for a new body of denominational literature, besides stimulating our people, especially our young people and ministers, to study more closely the Church to which they belong, thus fostering an intelligent loyalty, and making possible a co-operation of forces and activities which can not fail to result in broader usefulness and more pronounced success in all departments of church work.

In view of the purpose and scope of this projected series of books, it has been thought highly appropriate to name it "THE ALBRIGHT SERIES," in honor of the revered founder of our beloved Church, the Rev. Jacob Albright.



CHAPTER I.

PREREQUISITES.

Religion is based upon three fundamental propositions, without which it can not exist. These are, (1) That there is a living God who is the author of our being, is interested in our well being and, is worthy of our worship, and able and disposed to recognize our attempts to approach Him. (2) That man's will is free. (3) That man lives forever and does not cease with the dissolution of physical organism.

Upon these fundamental conceptions the Christian System wholly rests. That man is not an automaton, but a free self volitionating agent, possessing the power of initiative and self determination, and that he has a life which outlasts physical organism is as necessary to religion as that God is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

As a necessary corollary to these propositions we must also postulate that between these free and immortal beings and the supreme personal cause of the universe a vital relation sub-

sists by virtue of which human life is so touched with the Divine as to invest it with a dignity and interest quite unique and most impressive. Only upon this ground can the manifest divine interest in man, the redeeming work of Christ, His death upon the cross, and the inauguration of world wide evangelism be justified or accounted for. If God does not exist, or if, existing, He is not interested in human affairs, there can be no thought of religion, which is simply living, intelligent and affectionate communion with Him. If man is not free there can be neither virtue or happiness in a religious life. If man is not immortal he is not inherently worth saving. For if he dies or perishes there is not much that is of value that is lost. Then the sacrifice and death of Christ was a wanton and cruel waste, and the divine solicitude for us is inexplicable.

GOD AND MAN.

God and man are the two beings vitally concerned in the scheme of redemption. The angels who are the only other intelligent beings of whom we know anything are either safe or lost. Their destiny is irrevocably fixed. The angels

who kept not their first estate are reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the Judgment of the great day. Jude 6. Those angels who abode their time of probation are God's ministering spirits, happy in the companionship, favor and service of their God. But man is in need of and capable of redemption, though fallen into sin, and God is able and disposed to save him.

In order to get a fair understanding of the problem involved, several general truths must be stated.

OUR TEXT BOOK.

1. Our only infallible and sufficient source of religious knowledge is the Bible, which is the word of God, and in which the will, purpose and plan of God concerning men are clearly and positively revealed. The Bible therefore, with the best light we can get upon its teaching, is our great text book in the study of our subject. It is inspired by the Holy Spirit, and is a revelation from God upon the solemn and vital problems of human life and destiny. No other book can take its place or answer its purpose. It has been severely assailed and tested in the fiercest

crucible of human intellect, but it has survived the assaults of skeptical criticism and of infidelity, and stands firm and intact, "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture," as William E. Gladstone called it. Upon its truths faith rests secure. Here sorrow pillows its aching head; here grief dries its tears; here the human spirit gathers new hope and courage; here we have the guiding star of our life, through all the perplexities of our earthly experience.

THE INFALLIBLE GUIDE.

2. This great Book supplies the supreme religious need of the human spirit, an infallible guide. The need of certainty in religion is absolute. We may grope our way to scientific discovery and manage in temporal affairs with theories and guesses. We may indulge to our hearts' content in philosophical speculation. We may make life long experiments in mechanics, chemistry, or in testing the best commercial or industrial methods. But when it comes to religion, which touches, vitally, the eternal interests of the soul we must have certainty. Here doubt is perilous, and falsehood fatal. Only the truth makes men free. Faith must rest on fact. There are those

who say it makes no difference what a man believes, only so he is sincere. A dangerous fallacy, that. If a man believes a lie, the word of God assures us he will lose his soul. We are saved by belief of the truth. Sincere belief of falsehood will not do. We must have certainty. This certainty is afforded us in the word of God. This word meets fully and exactly the spiritual need of the human soul and answers adequately its deepest aspirations. Its truths are not a discovery, but a revelation.

BELIEF IN GOD FUNDAMENTAL.

3. According to this word, the belief in the existence and goodness of God is fundamentally essential to a religious life. He that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Heb. 11:6. The belief in the existence of God, indeed, is an intuition of the soul, universal and ineradicable in the human race. But there are those who in the perversity of their depraved nature endeavor to deny and crush these deep intuitions, and throw around this fairest flower that grows in the spoiled Eden of our being, the dust and cobwebs of so-called Reason, which

is indeed the greatest unreason. The man who makes an atheist of himself—no man is by nature an atheist—will certainly not come to a God in whose existence he professes not to believe. It is clear therefore, that atheism, like its opposite, saving virtue, faith, is of the heart rather than of the head. It is clear, also, that there is good reason for the Scriptural demand that he that cometh to God must believe that he is. He must also believe that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. It is the conviction that God is interested and solicitous for His creatures; it is hope in the mercy of God, confidence in His goodness, expectation of gracious help, that inspires men to come to Him for salvation.

THE GOD OF THE BIBLE.

4. The God of the Bible is infinite in all the attributes of His Being, perfect in His moral character, supreme in authority, the Absolute, uncreated, eternal, self-sufficient, self-existent One. He is not only the Creator of all things, but the foundation of all existences and His will is the supreme law of the universe. He is infinite in goodness and love, always choosing

the highest good as the final purpose of all action. He is perfect in all wisdom and knows infallibly what ought to be done to attain the highest good of His creatures. He is infinite in power, and therefore able to do that which His wisdom and love dictate should be done. He is absolutely just and holy. There is no unrighteousness in Him. He is of too pure an eye to behold iniquity. Holiness is the Kohinoor in the coronet of His preeminence. Therefore while He loves His creatures, He is inherently and absolutely antagonistic to all moral wrong, for the absolute norm of moral character and conduct is Himself. He will do the right “though the heaven falls”—but the heavens will not fall, for they are upheld by the right hand of His righteousness, and all things by the word of His power.

DIVINE SUPREMACY.

5. As the supreme being, of infinite wisdom, goodness, justice, and love, God is absolute in authority. His will is the law of the universe, His nature the law of our lives. Harmony with God is the final basis of human happiness. To Him also we are therefore accountable. We are

in the profoundest sense dependent upon Him, and responsible to Him. Our life rounds up in the end before His great Judgment throne. Nor can we escape that final arbitrament of our destiny.

THE TRINITY.

It is necessary to remind ourselves, also, that the God of revelation, who purposed, planned and procured the redemption, is triune in the mode of His existence. The doctrine of the Trinity is necessary to any understanding of the Bible plan of salvation. It is indeed a great mystery, and will remain forever unfathomable, yet it is essential to any understanding of scriptural statements regarding God's work in man's salvation. The doctrine is thus formulated: "There is but one true and living God, an eternal Being, a Spirit without body, indivisible, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; Creator and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. And in this Godhead there is a Trinity, of one substance and power, and co-eternal; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

THE TRINITY REDEMPTIONAL.

The whole Trinity in the Godhead was and is active in the redemption of man. The Father who is the essential God, the center and source of all things, in whom the Son and the Holy Spirit are one, is the Fountain and Source of salvation; the Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, and one with Him, is the Procuring Agent, the provider of salvation; the Holy Spirit is the administrator of salvation. The three Persons in the adorable Trinity work together, each, in all the plenitude of the Divine attributes, each, in the fulness of the Divine passion for humanity, each in perfect accord with the others, each in all and all in each, striving for our individual rescue. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, forever and ever, Amen!

THE SEED OF SALVATION.

6. The human race is sinful, and depraved, and in dire need of salvation. The whole idea of the plan of salvation proceeds upon this truth. Man is a sinner. Every man is a sinner. That is the *raison d'être* of the plan of salvation.

In his sinfulness, man is powerless to save himself. He can not alter his own nature. He can not blot out the wrong act. He can not make one black spot, white. He cannot undo his crimes, nor regain the favor of God by any act or sacrifice of merit. For him the door of hope is closed forever, unless opened by some hand other than his own. It is true, of himself he knows no other way to save himself than by certain acts of merit. Heathen religions impose frightful self-tortures in order to appease the anger of the gods. Hindu fakirs pierce themselves with iron nails, impale themselves on spears, let the fierce sun burn their eyes out of their sockets, all in order to gain ultimate felicity. Merit, they conceive, cannot come from acts alone, but from self-inflicted suffering; there comes the merit of atonement, the power of propitiation. Every man feels that something must be done to take away sin, to lift the load of guilt. It cannot be done by works of super-erogation, because ability and obligation are at any moment exactly equal. A man is always bound to do all he is able to do. He is never justified in doing less. He is never able to do more. Ought and can are

equal to each other. Therefore he is helpless to extricate himself from the meshes in which he is entangled. To attempt it is like trying to lift one's self from the ground by his own boot straps.

SINFULNESS.

Yet sin, unless we are delivered from it, will work out its dire results upon those who are guilty of it. It is a disease of the soul that works out death to the soul, unless an antidote can be found. Sin is the transgression of the law. It is lawlessness. And the law distinctly says the soul that sinneth it shall die. That law is supreme and inexorable. Moral law works with as much precision as so-called natural law. It is so to speak, automatic in its operation, for it rests upon the nature of things. It is not arbitrary, but it is an expression of eternal, absolute justice. Its demands therefore, must be met in some way. It yields no quarter. It works itself out to the bitter end. Therefore, the need of salvation. Cannon Liddon aptly says:

The Gospel presents us with the Scriptural idea of sin provoking the wrath of God and establishing be-

tween man and God a state of enmity; and the idea points to some awful interposition which shall bring relief. The idea of sin, as revealed in Scripture points to a Divine Redeemer.

All men are sinners. Modern literature is full of confessions of this sad but incontestable fact. Men are not in harmony with God. This is the awful truth. Men may gloss it over, make light of it, excuse it. But the dreadful truth remains. It will not down. It makes its force known in human hearts and lives and in human society, as the most solemn and serious fact in the world, and as the most malignant force in society.

HOPELESSNESS OF THE SINFUL STATE.

Deeds of wickedness, acts of sin, are irrevocable. They can never be recalled, and they and their perpetrators are indissolubly knit up with their consequences. The Nemesis of mythology was not more relentless in her pursuit of evil-doers, than is sin. Laocoön was not more hopelessly entangled in the coil of writhing, deadly serpents, than the sinner in the tightening grip of the serpent of sin. The deadly, desperate tyranny of sin is well shown in St.

Paul's dramatic picture in Romans, the seventh chapter, when he says: "But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good (the law); that sin by the commandment might become more sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.....For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that do I.....I find then a law that when I would do good, evil is present with me.....O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:13-24. Here is abject slavery, unmitigated corruption. The very goodness of the law is turned into a curse. The best impulses are crushed by the paralysis of my power to follow them; my strongest endeavors are failures; my best resolutions are nullified by the ever present, and apparently incurable malady which prevents me from carrying them into effect. "Evil is present with me." Like

conscience and the sense of obligation, it haunts me at every turn. It paralyzes all my effort, puts out all my fires, turns all my fruit into apples of Sodom. Sin thus becomes the evil genius of my life.

We have seen that there is no help for man in himself. He cannot save himself. The choice of good—which he is unable to make, does not spring from the cesspool of his own moral condition. The tree of human depravity can not bring forth the fruit of a righteous life any more than thistles can bring forth figs, or thorns grapes. If a man is ever saved, it must be by some power outside himself, and other than the human world around him.

That power could be nothing less than Divine, to be adequate. It takes a God to save a man. It takes infinite resources of personal love, compassion, wisdom, and power, to rescue a fallen, guilt-imperilled soul.

OUR PROBLEM.

Our problem therefore, is to point the way out of this dreadful doom. We are not in “Darkest Africa,” nor “Darkest England,” but

in the darkest wilderness of sin, and we want to know the way out. We are estranged from God, and out of harmony with Him; how are we to find reconciliation, peace, final felicity? This is the great problem of human existence. The word of God answers the question and solves the problem for us. That is our guide in our attempt in this book to answer the question: How to be saved.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROBLEM AND PURPOSE OF REDEMPTION.

REDEMPTION DIVINE.

The plan of Redemption is wholly Divine. It is Divine in the motive that prompted it, in the wisdom that planned it, and in the purpose that inspired it. The thought originated in the heart of God. Human sin was the occasion for its conception. Man, as God created him, upright, did not need salvation. Fallen man would never have conceived the idea. Man has sought out many inventions, but the thought and plan of salvation is not one of them. That is a Divine thought. Nor is it to be thought of as having been devised after the human race failed in its probation and became a transgressor. Salvation is not an afterthought—an attempt to patch up an unforeseen breakdown, or mend a sudden failure in the Divine plan. The word of God teaches us that the purpose of Redemption is eternal. Eph. 3.11:: “According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ

Jesus." His purpose was formed in Himself, not prompted from without. Eph. 1:5:9.

Indeed this great purpose must have been in the mind of God in the very thought of man's creation. It antedates creation. For He created man after His own image and after His likeness. (Gen. 1:26, 27) That is, not only in righteousness and true holiness, (Eph. 4:24) but free, capable of choosing between right and wrong. The terms of His probation (Gen. 2:16, 17), indicate and prove his freedom. This endowment of freedom involved the possibility of sin. The man would not have been truly free, had he not been free to sin. This was the fearful possibility involved. But God could not otherwise have made the highest type of created being, which is a free moral agent. He could not otherwise make a true image of Himself. Inert matter obeys the inexorable laws of matter. It does so blindly, and without virtue. It has no choice. The brute obeys as blindly the impulses and laws of instinct. It does not reason, it has no choice, no conception of motives, no responsibility. But man reasons and thinks. He is susceptible to motives. He has the power of initiative. He has in conscience

the sense of right and wrong in motives, the consciousness of moral quality in his actions, and of responsibility to a higher power. These he cannot escape. But neither can he escape making a choice, and bearing responsibility. This power of moral choice, buttressed by reason and conscience, constitutes man's kinship to God. In it lies his inherent worth. In it also lies his power to go wrong. All this, and the possibilities which the creation of a being so endowed involved, were fully understood and taken into account by the Creator before He created man. It would be absurd to suppose otherwise. And taking into account the absolute goodness of God, it is inconceivable that He should counsel (Gen. 1:26) the creation of a being who should carry the possibility of sin in his constitutional endowments, without having devised in advance both the purpose and the method of his rescue.

INVOLVED IN THE CREATION OF MAN.

The purpose of redemption is morally involved in the act of creation. This purpose antedates and was manifestly the ground of the creation of man. For our creation was pur-

posed in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:10) i. e., we are created in the Redeemer. The Redeemer is thus the real first cause of our being. He made us possible. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made (John 1:13). He has been appointed heir of all things: by him also God made the worlds, i. e. built up the ages(Heb. 1:13). All things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things exist (Col. 1:16, 17). For by him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever, Amen (Rom. 11:16). Thus it appears that the Redeemer of mankind is the author of creation. He is not only the Revelation of God, but the Explanation, the Reconciler of all things. In Him also the divinely designed destiny of mankind has its goal. If it were not for Christ, man would not be. In Christ Jesus God purposed man's redemption, and therefore his creation, his endowment, his possibilities, his destiny.

This purpose of redemption was formed in love. God is love; therefore the redemption of the free being, who, created in the image of

God, fell into transgression and guilt, incurring the irrevocable penalty of the law, eternal death. God is love; therefore Christ died for the ungodly. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16). God did not sacrifice His Son in order that He might love us, but because He loved us. His love made Him desire, devise and procure our redemption, and seek reconciliation with us. Christ did not die for us in order to appease the wrath of God, on the one hand, and the righteousness of God on the other, but that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:25 25, 26). It is the Divine passion for human souls that called forth this marvellous effort and priceless sacrifice. It moved the eternal God in infinite compassion for a fallen race.

Thus salvation is by grace, not in works, or merit, lest any man should boast. It goes forth from the infinite mercy of Jehovah, and derives all its motives and its initial impulse from Him. Man did not suggest it. Man did nothing and could do nothing to merit or procure

it. It is all of God and all of grace. The grace of God! How boundless and free! How all embracing, how abundant! O the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of God in Christ Jesus! It passeth knowledge!

CALLED FORTH BY FALL OF MAN.

The thing that called forth this manifestation and proof of Divine love for mankind, is the fall of man into sin. As we have seen, God created man in His own image, and after His own likeness, that is, in righteousness and true holiness, but free to choose between good and evil. His righteousness was put to the test, as it must have been, in order to become a positive virtue. Under that test he fell, and in so doing incurred both guilt and depravity.

1. Guilt is the shadow of condemnation which the act of sin throws upon the actor. It is the awakening force of the law against its violation, and the creation of the fact and sense of blameworthiness because of committed wrong. This fact and sense of guilt or blameworthiness comes only upon actual transgressors. But the Scriptures teach that this be-

comes an actuality with everyone of us, who become old enough to choose consciously between right and wrong. For we have all gone astray. (Isa. 53:6). There is not one that doeth good, not one. (Psa. 14:1; Rom 3:12). There is none righteous, no not one (Rom. 3:10). All have sinned (Rom. 5:12, 23). They are all under sin (Rom. 3:9). Such is the indictment against us. And the word also says: The soul that sinneth it shall die. There is no possibility of escape from guilt on our own account, as we have seen in our first chapter. There is no method of deliverance and escape, except in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are under an obligation which we cannot meet; we have incurred a debt which we cannot pay. We are helplessly undone by our own wickedness. Nor is this all.

2. The first act of disobedience on the part of the federal head of the race brought a condition of sinfulness into human nature, which is so ineradicable, that it invariably transmits itself to every member of the human family, by the law of heredity, so that every human being is born in this sinful condition. That is,

sin has brought us into a depraved state. We are born with our back toward God. We come into this world with a sinful bias, a trend or tendency to evil. For this we are not responsible, nor are our parents, but this does not alter the fact, nor relieve us of the responsibility for our own actual transgressions.

Our condition is well described in such passages as Isaiah 1:6: From the sole of the feet even unto the head there is no soundness in it; Jeremiah 17:9: The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it? See also Rom. 1:21-32. In Rom. 5:12, we read: "For by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin." In Adam all the race fell into sin. Through the offence of one, many are dead. Rom. 5:15. So also we are said to be dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. 2:1. Dead! Incapable in ourselves of any good. The life of virtue is extinct. The whole man is under the dominion of sin—sold under sin. Rom. 7:14. Sin has poisoned his physical, moral, and spiritual nature. It has so ruined him, that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually (Gen. 6:5.

ments of unrighteousness unto sin. Rom. 6:13. It has vitiated his thoughts, warped his judgment, dwarfed his intellect, seared his conscience, debased his appetites, inflamed his passions, polluted his affections, corrupted his desires, enslaved his will. In every drop of blood, its poison flows; in every pulse its force appears.

Sin not only destroys the individual. As is the individual, in the aggregate, so is society, so are the nations. The bloodshed and tyranny and cruelty and injustice that mark the history of mankind are but the outward manifestations of sin. Sin is the explanation of it. Men ask, why does God bring all this upon the human family? God does not bring it upon us. It is simply the working out of the effects of sin. It is the bitter harvest of the sinful sowing. It is the whirlwind that comes by the natural and moral law to those who sow the wind. God is not responsible for sin itself. It is wrong to say it comes by Divine permission. That would be to make Him *particeps criminis*. Sin came without God's permission. That is its nature. Sin is anarchy,

lawlessness. Sin came by man's consent, not God's. With sin came sorrow, pain, death, and all the evils and ills that afflict mankind. These are here because sin is here. Man the sinner, is also the sufferer. The law works out its penalty upon transgressors, and makes no mistakes.

THE RUIN OF THE RACE.

The whole human race is one great cesspool of iniquity and of wrong. Apparently the innocent suffer most, but in reality, those who often seem freest from pain, though greatest in guilt, suffer in the end the keenest sorrows. They may enjoy life for a season, but troubles come often at last. There is no injustice, no favoritism in the government of God. But sin works out its dire results without fail. **THE GREAT TRUTH IS, MAN IS A SINNER, AND AS SUCH IN NEED OF SALVATION.** Sin is not an episode in the evolution of the race, not a necessary step in man's progress toward civilization, not a symbolical representation of primitive savagery, but a catastrophe, a tragedy in the history of human experience, a mighty moral fact, whose grip is relentlessly

fastened on the human soul. This is not only the teaching of the word of God, but of human experience, of conscience and consciousness, and of history. The fact of sin is obvious. It cannot be ignored by anyone who would understand either history or providence. Nor can we deny its presence and power in our hearts and lives. It is the serpent against whose deadly coils Laocoön struggles desperately, but in vain. It is the supreme moral tragedy of the universe, the poison in the cup of human happiness, the sting of death, the source and cause of all human misery and pain. Doctor Guthrie thus describes sin:

Sin is a debt, a burden, a thief, a sickness, a leprosy, a plague, a poison, a serpent, a sting; everything that man hates, sin is. It is the sexton that digs his grave. It is the murderer that destroys his life. It is the fair siren who, seated on the rock, by the deadly pool, smiles to deceive, sings to lure, kisses to betray, and flings her arm around our neck to leap with us into perdition.

God alone could meet the case. He alone fully understood and correctly estimated the force of evil. He alone was both able and willing to undertake man's restoration and rescue. The problem, as we have seen—if we may speak of problems in the mind of God,—was not an easy one. It was not a problem of physics or

mechanics, or mathematics. It was a sublime moral problem. HOW CAN GOD BE JUST AND JUSTIFY THE UNGODLY? The problem being presented, and the purpose being formed, what was God's method of procedure? We have already seen that both the Purpose and the Plan by which the Purpose is accomplished are alike wholly Divine, and known to us only by revelation. We therefore depend wholly upon the word of God for answer. Man could not invent it. He could not even desire it, for he was dead in his trespasses and sins.

CHAPTER III.

THE REDEEMER AND HIS WORK.

THE LAMB SLAIN.

In the fifth chapter of the book of Revelation we have a most dramatic vision of the coming forth of the Son of God for the redemption of the world. "In the hand of Him that sat upon the throne" the Seer saw a "book" or roll, written within and without, on the back side, sealed with seven seals." A challenge is proclaimed to the assembled throng of heavenly hierarchies: "Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof?" That book contained the mystery of redemption, the problem of salvation. The scene is laid in the bosom of eternity. No one ventured forward. There was no response. The Seer wept in sorrow, if not in despair, for if that book cannot be opened, if that problem cannot be solved, if no one is found capable of undertaking this stupendous exploit, then the sinner's doom is sealed; Hell is sure of her prey. Then are blotted out all of earth's fairest hopes, and

every radiant star is extinguished. But the sorrowing Seer is quickly comforted. "Weep not," said an elder to him, "For behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." And when the Seer looked, he saw, not a Lion, but "a Lamb as it had been slain." And when He had taken the book, they sang a new song—the song of deliverance, redemption, atonement. They celebrated a complete success, the final triumph, in an exploit so magnificent as to be without any comparison whatever.

The steps in the execution of the plan of redemption by which provision was made, fully, for the salvation of all men, are next to be noted.

THE INCARNATION.

1. The Incarnation. Sin had separated us from God. A middle wall of partition had been raised between us and our God. In some way God must re-establish vital relations between Himself and us. This was accomplished first by the incarnation. God was manifested in the flesh (1. Tim. 3:16). The word was made

flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth (St. John 1:14). The Son of God became the Son of Man. And His name was called Jesus—Savior. In the language of the Creed: “He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. Here we stand before the mystery of the incarnation. This truth has been ridiculed and doubted and explained away. But the truth of it remains. That it is supernatural no one denies. But supernaturalness is no proof of unreality. We do not here argue the question at length. We only point out, that the person and character, the moral supremacy and spiritual superiority of Jesus cannot otherwise be accounted for. The phenomenon of both moral and intellectual perfection, unique as it is, stamps Him at once as something more than human. And perfection is conceded by His critics and His enemies to have been peculiar to Him. Those who deny the true Deity of Jesus our Savior, are bound to account for the perfection of His character and teaching, and for His increasing influence in the human world, upon some other adequate ground, which they have never yet pointed out. The Person of Jesus must be conceded to be

as much superior to that of earth's best teachers, as the quality of His teaching and influence is superior to theirs. There cannot be an effect without an adequate cause.

But it is enough for us here to point out that the Scripture plainly teaches the Deity of Jesus Christ. Divine attributes are ascribed to Him, Divine acts of power and wisdom are recorded of Him, Divine qualities are predicated of Him, Divine honors are given to Him. He is very God, not a manifestation of God, but the manifested God, not merely the revealer of God, but the Revelation of God. He is the brightness of Jehovah's glory, the express image of His person (Heb. 1, 3). He is the image of the invisible God (Col. 2, 9). In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2, 3). For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell (Col. 1, 19). The word was God (Jno. 1, 1.)

There is therefore no doubt as to the teaching of the Scripture. These passages are simple and unequivocal. And indeed how glad we are that this is so, for even uncertainty on this point would be fatal. Every man who ever

comes to realize any adequate consciousness of sin, feels that only God can save him. If Christ is not Divine, this world has no adequate Saviour. And all who have experienced the grace of God in their personal salvation are ready to cry out that "CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD WITH POWER." In Him omnipotence is stretched out toward human helplessness. In His fullness there is a supply for all our emptiness and thirst. In His infinity of love is the antidote for all our mean and narrow selfishness.

But this Deity of nature is revealed in manhood. He, being in the form of God, who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion as a man" (Phil. 2:6-8). In reference to him Isaiah said: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Isa. 9, 6). Of his birth it is said: "She (Mary) brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger." (Luke 2, 7). How perfectly simple and normally human is all

this. He always called himself the Son of man, rarely the Son of God, though he permitted others to give Him the latter title.

His humanity was a real living in flesh and blood. He was human in His mode of existence and in His limitations; human in His susceptibility to pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow; human in modes of thought and forms of speech; human in all His physical needs, His intellectual activities and moral powers. Human also in His experiences. He entered into the common lot of mankind, sharing its sorrows and privations, taking upon Himself our sins and weaknesses, entering into its temptations and tests, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Though He were a Son, yet learning obedience by the things which He suffered, and made perfect through suffering, shaken with fear and anguish even unto strong crying and tears. In short in Him God not only became our Father, but our Brother, our fellow Sufferer. In Him the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of man are realized. Without Him, these ideas have no foundation in reality. In Him, God projected Himself into

human nature, human experience, and human life.

Only in one point, and that the point of supreme significance, is Jesus differentiated from universal humanity, and that is, in His sinlessness. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.—Without sin, not only in act, but in nature. Yet He came close enough to us to save us. His sinlessness gave Him the fulcrum Archimedes wished for, with which to lift the world. His humanity placed Him in perfect sympathy with us. He was made a little lower than the angels (Heb. 3, 9); He, the Sanctifier, became one with those whom He sanctified, “for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren” (Heb. 3, 11). “For verily, He took not on Him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. Wherefore, in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful High Priest, for in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted” (Heb. 3:16-18).

Could union be closer, or identity more real, than that? Man who by Creation is in the

image of God, thus became the organ of the revelation of God to man. God could reveal His will in deeds, His thoughts in words of human speech, His moral quality in Providence, but He could reveal Himself to man, only through and in man. The Divine Person must be articulated in human personality to be savingly apprehended by men. So He said to Philip, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. And how sayest thou: Show us the Father?" (Jno. 14, 9).

THE ATONEMENT.

2. The Atonement. But the purpose of the incarnation was not only to give us an adequate revelation of God, but to furnish the medium of atonement. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.... Then said I: Lo I come, (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will O God" (Heb. 10:5-7). He came in the flesh that He might die in the flesh, that He might shed the red blood of real human life, and make His soul, or life, an offering for sin. He took upon Himself a human body that He might bear our sins. We are sanctified through

the offering of the body of Christ (Heb. 10, 10). His flesh was the veil, rent, that He might consecrate for us a new and living way. (Heb. 10, 20). We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus (Heb. 10, y9). His wounds are the gate-way to the throne of grace and the heart of God.

(a) The Scripture plainly teaches that the death of Jesus was vicarious, that is, substitutional. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8), that is, in our stead, in our behalf. Christ died for (instead of and for the sake of) the ungodly (Rom. 5:6). Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (Jno. 15:13). That is what is meant by vicarious dying. The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep (Jno. 10:11), that is, in order to save them from the wolf. For He hath made Him to be sin (Gr. sin offering) for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor. 5:22). He tasted death for every man (Heb. 29). He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; by His stripes we are healed (Isa.

53:5). Passages distinctly expressing this truth are too numerous to quote or cite. The entire Levitical law teaches this truth, that Christ sacrificed Himself in our place and in our behalf, in such a way that God accepts his suffering and sacrifice in lieu of our guilt and punishment which must otherwise justly come upon us. Not that He paid our debt absolutely, finally, and unconditionally, but He made provision that upon our meeting certain stated conditions, our debt may be, and will be, freely cancelled. Forgiveness to us is merited by the sacrifice of Christ for us.

(b) The death of Christ was voluntary. I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. (Jno. 17:1-18). To Pilate He said: Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above. (Jno. 19:11).

(c) The death of Christ was a perfect sacrifice, perfect in moral quality, perfect in purity, perfect in wholeness. He offered Himself without spot to God (Heb. 9:14). He was slain as

a lamb without spot or blemish (2 Pet. 3:14). His perfect and sinless humanity, stamped with infinite worth by the seal of His perfect and real Divinity, offered voluntarily in our stead, was a sacrifice not only well pleasing to God, but of sufficient value to atone for the sins of the whole world. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 Jno. 2:2). He redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us, that is, His curse became a substitute and equivalent for that which we justly deserved, in such a way that we may go free, and have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. He was delivered for our offences and rose again for our justification. By His own blood He obtained eternal redemption for us. His death was the means of our redemption. His blood is the ransom price for our souls. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission, for in the blood is the life.

Even thus is the Cross the hope and joy and glory of the world. On the Cross atonement was made. The balance sheet of the

moral government of God was struck on Calvary. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of Him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:25, 26). Love, infinite and supreme, brought the stupendous sacrifice which righteousness demanded, and now we may be freely justified by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Christ solved the problem of forgiveness. On the basis of Christ's atonement, God is able to pardon sin without any infraction of the moral integrity of His nature and government, on the one hand, and without the abandonment of that wholesome and necessary discipline which in pardoning a sinner on any other basis would make the sinner more reckless and disobedient, on the other. God is eternally just and absolutely righteous, therefore the demand for a righteous adjustment of human wrong. God is love, therefore His inmost nature prompted the giving of His only begotten Son (Jno. 3:16). Christ died in accordance with the joint de-

mand of both righteousness and love, and therefore there is no just bar to pardon. The handwriting of ordinances which was against us, Jesus took out of the way, nailing it to His Cross (Col. 2 14). God is just as well as merciful, in forgiving sin, and saving sinners.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONDITIONS OF SALVATION.

THE CONSENT OF THE HUMAN WILL.

In the provisions of the Gospel, through the incarnation and atonement of Jesus Christ, God has met, unconditionally the needs of the human soul. He stooped to our helplessness, and did that for us which we could not do for ourselves, and did it generously, royally, divinely. In the face of all our wickedness, God willed our salvation, and provided salvation from all sin for all men. As in Adam all die, so in Christ, the second man, all are made alive, potentially. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness. The righteousness of God is declared and vindicated in Jesus Christ, and imparted unto us by the Holy Ghost as the power of a righteous life—unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 5:20, 21).

SALVATION CONDITIONAL.

Yet it must be admitted that not all men are

actually saved. Christ died in vain in the case of some, so far as their personal salvation and eternal happiness is concerned, which they never experience or attain. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance, but the experience of salvation, the gift of eternal life comes only upon positively stated, and well defined conditions which we must fulfill. This is based upon several very evident facts in the nature of God and in the constitution of man, for the plan of salvation, including the conditions of its personal realization, is what it is, because God is what He is. In motive and method, in purpose and content, the plan of salvation is the supreme manifestation of the nature and will of God, on the one hand, and perfectly adapted to the nature, constitution, condition, and highest well-being of man, on the other.

God is holy, just, pure, and good, perfectly so in all respects. He is holy, therefore must and does require holiness in us. He is free in His holiness, and holy in His freedom. He is holy also in His love. He loves the sinner, the fallen human being with infinite love, and

proves it by the sacrifice of His Son, the highest, holiest, costliest sacrifice that even God could make. But at the same time He hates sin, with a perfect divine hatred, and proves that by the same sacrifice. The Cross stands both for the depth of God's love for man the sinner, and for the intensity and reality of His hatred for sin. It expresses His passion for the removal of that which has brought enmity between Himself and His creature, man. Sin runs in the blood, hence sinless blood must flow for our deliverance from it. The sacrifice was lovingly made.

But man is also free. He has a will of his own, and may set his will against God's will. He became a sinner by preferring sin. Preference for sin consequently became the trend and bias of his nature. Ultimate salvation therefore is in no sense mechanical, or a taking of the man from one place to another, but an eradication of this "bent to sinning," and a restoration of the soul to harmonious fellowship with God in righteousness and true holiness. The sinner is to be saved from his sins, not only from guilt, but from the sinful affections and

desires which lead him astray and soil and spoil his character. This cannot be done, — notwithstanding all the provisions of Gospel grace, — without man's consent. The man must will to be saved. He must make deliberate choice of God and of His way of salvation.

In this aspect of the case the human will is supreme, its decision final. There is no appeal from it. The grace of God intervening in our fall, preserved within us and amid the wreckage of our lives, this God-like power of a free choice. The human will is autocratic. We can not, it is true, do in all things as we please; in physical, intellectual, and social relations, we are to a large extent, creatures of circumstances. We are molded by environment; certain tendencies within us are hereditary family traits; we are influenced by other and stronger minds; we are forced by conditions which we cannot control. But in the determination of our future destiny, in the choice of our attitude and relation toward God, we are absolutely autocratic. We can do as we please, but we must take the consequences. We can resist God, or we can yield to Him. Nothing can interfere. The influence of the Holy Spirit,

in persuading us to accept life in Christ is purely and wholly persuasive; it is not compulsory. The influence of evil, of the arch enemy of the soul is great, but it is persuasive, not compulsory. If a man determines by deliberate choice to live in sin and go to perdition, God cannot save him. God can do a great deal —He has done a great deal—what has He not done to save us?! But He does not force us; He does not violate the sovereignty of the human will. A man can go to perdition if he wants to. Nothing, not even God, can prevent him, if that is his final purpose and choice.

But it is also true that if a man resolves to submit to God and accept salvation in Jesus Christ; if he determines to flee the wrath to come and go to Heaven, all the forces of the pit cannot keep him out of Heaven. He can be saved if he wants to. The moment he determines upon this course, he enters upon a league with God Almighty. All the resources of omnipotence, that are in the service of redemption are marshalled in his behalf. God is on his side, because he has put himself on God's side. And if God be for him, who can be against him? HE CAN IF HE WILL. So

then the first prerequisite is decision. A man must decide, and decide for himself. The possession of a sovereign will lays the responsibility at his door. He holds his destiny in his own hands.

So near to grandeur is our dust,
So near to God is man,
When Duty whispers, "Lo, thou must,"
The soul replies, "I can."

"Nothing," said Mirabeau, "is impossible to the man who can will. Is that necessary? Then that shall be. This is the law of success."

When he comes to a right decision, his will and God's will coincide in a common purpose. This is not only the first fundamental requisite to salvation, but it is the essential element in all that eventuates in a man's salvation (Phil. 2:12, 13). There must be coincidence; there must be divine and human co-operation. But this means that man must come around to God's way. God will never come around to man's whims or ways. There must be a merging of the human will in the divine, a blending of the human spirit with the Divine, until, like two lovers, God and we are as

“Two souls with but a single thought,
Two hearts that beat as one.”

IS MAN TOTALLY DEPRAVED?

The question now arises, how is all this possible in man's fallen condition? Is not the man utterly helpless and incapable of any good? Is not the man totally depraved? To this last question we answer, Yes, and No. He is totally depraved in the sense that his entire being, spirit, soul, and body, with all his powers, faculties, and members is affected by the fall. “The trail of the serpent is over it all.” But he is not totally depraved in the sense that he is not redeemable. He is not fallen beyond the possibility of restoration. Man is a terrible wreck, but there is some good material under the debris.

“Down in the human heart,
Crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore.
Touched by a loving heart
Wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.”

This too is due to the grace of God, which intervened in our fall, and prevented us from falling beyond redemption. As we have seen,

the free will remains, so also conscience remains, the susceptibility to motives remains; the intelligent judgment remains; immortality remains; the soul's inherent indestructibility remains. Though the powers and faculties of our moral and intellectual natures are not in their normal strength, and though anarchy largely reigns, yet the capacity for restoration remains. The materials are here for the rebuilding of the Lord's temple. Then the Spirit of God, who is sent forth to make the Gospel of the grace of God potential in the hearts of men, works upon their hearts unconditionally. He works both to will and to do—that is both the disposition of mind, and the capacity to perform—of His good pleasure. Therefore we are exhorted to work out our own salvation (Phil. 2:12, 13). He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11). He is a power that worketh in us. (Eph. 3:20).

1. The Holy Ghost awakens and enlightens the soul. This is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. (John 1:9).
2. He convinces men of sin, of righteous-

ness, and of judgment to come (John 16:8). “Of sin,” says the Savior, “because they believe not on Me (verse 9). That is, the Holy Spirit convinces of the sin of unbelief, and of the rejection of our only Savior, which is the acme of rebellion against God. “Of righteousness, because I go to my Father” (v. 10). That is, my character and authority are vindicated by my ascension and exaltation. Him whom men crucified and rejected, God has exalted to his right hand, to be a Prince and a Savior, and thus the fact of the Savior’s holiness is proclaimed to the condemnation of sinners. “Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” That is, the evil master whom men have chosen to serve is condemned and doomed, as the antipodes of all good. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring all this to bear upon the conscience and judgment of men. He especially convinces guilty men of their sin.

3. He calls men to repentance and salvation. He speaks to them in conscience. The conscience also bearing witness (to the work of the law in the heart), and their thoughts the mean-while accusing or else excusing one another. (Rom.

2. 15). For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. (Rom. 11:29).

All this grace comes to us through the Gospel, unconditionally. Our need of salvation, the possibility of salvation, our responsibility and privilege in regard thereto are presented plainly before the mind. We become keenly, painfully, involuntarily, conscious of all this. But we can stifle conviction, we can sear the conscience, we can stiffen the neck, and harden the heart; we can close eyes and ears,—we can fight against God. We can refuse to yield to conviction, and to act upon the high sense of duty. The Spirit will strive with us, but we may successfully strive against him. We may say, I will not, when he says we ought. He may call, and we may deliberately refuse to hear and heed. Thus we come finally, to the parting of the ways. Many do this. O, it is a fatal crime, to thus do despite the Spirit of grace. *This is the crucial point. It is the valley of decision.* It is the diamond pivot of destiny. For the Spirit will not always strive with man. (Gen. 6:3). They resist to their own death. A time comes when the fiat goes forth from the throne:

Let Ephraim alone: he is joined to his idols.
(Hos. 4:17).

“There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at its rise leads on to fortune,
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows, and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat;
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.”

Julius Ceasar IV. 3.

Happy he who heeds when he hears the voice of God in his soul. In the direction of the current of the Holy Spirit’s work lies peace at the foot of the cross, and joy and safety. Eternal life is in that call. But we must make the call effective. The Spirit who works in us both to will and to do, does not destroy our power to say no. He calls, He sets before us life and death and says, “Choose ye,” but we must answer. There is no more thrilling crisis in a human life, than the moment when the Spirit of God earnestly calls us to repentance. Three worlds hang in suspense, and await in breathless anxiety, our choice. Do we say no, to God, in that solemn and holy crisis? That means to close the door of hope with our own hands, and refuse by our own choice the only

chance of salvation. It means to requite the infinite love of God with ingratitude, and reject with vulgar hardness the gentle wooing of His Spirit. It is to make the death of Christ of none effect in our behalf. It is to make the message of life, a savor of death unto death. It is to nullify the very purpose of God, and to refuse to our own eternal hurt the supreme and holy desire of God for our salvation. For the work of the Holy Spirit in persuading us to forsake sin, is but the continuation of that mighty love that moved the eternal God to die for men. He stirs the human spirit to action by the blood red argument of Calvary. And the rejection of His call is the rejection of God, and of His marvelous love. Nothing can be more pathetic than this life long struggle of the Spirit of God, under the impulse of the love revealed on Calvary, to save a perverted human being from himself, from his own perversity and corruption, and from the consequences of a course of sin.

THE WOOING OF THE SPIRIT.

With the first dawn of moral consciousness this wooing of the Spirit begins. It continues

through the high tide of life, often to the period of gray hairs and decrepitude. Long after human patience and love would be exhausted, the gentle, patient Spirit of God broods over the dying soul, seeking to win it unto life eternal. Truly, "the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting (Psa. 103:17). Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation (Isa. 45:17). The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee (Jer. 31:3). Wherefore, I will yet plead with you, saith the Lord, and with your children's children will I plead (Jer. 2:9). The Lord hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel (Mic. 6:2). O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not! (Matt. 23:37). Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matt. 11:28). Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life (John 6:47). And

the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let Him that heareth, say come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" Rev. 22:17).

In the parable of the great Supper (Luke 14. 16-24,) the Savior represents the chosen guests as excusing themselves, and as declining the invitation. The servants were then sent out into the "highways and hedges," and were told to compel them to come in, i. e. use most earnest persuasion to get them to come in. The others rejected the invitation, and lost not only the royal bounty of the supper, but the friendship of the rejected host. All these and many other passages of the same tenor, make it too clear for further argument, that the Gospel through the Spirit offers men salvation as a free gift, and that they are free to accept or reject it. Their will decrees the case for themselves, but they lose all that heaven means, all that eternal life means, they lose their souls, by rejecting the Savior, and resisting the persuasions of the Holy Spirit.

THE CALLS OF PROVIDENCE.

So God also seeks to win men by His pro-

vidence. The providence of God, whatever its mysteries, is redemptional. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance? (Rom. 3:4). The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). For this reason, God delays His judgments, and lengthens out the time for probation, that men might repent. "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not return from his ways and live?" (Ezek. 18:23). In Luke 13:8, 9, the vine dresser pleads for the barren fig-tree: "Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it; And if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."

God's providences are for the most part veiled from our eyes. We do not recognize them. They work under the guise of natural laws, and forces. But all the time He is seeking to lead us to repentance. Does He daily load us with benefits? It is that we may repent. Does He lead us to the verge of some precipice, some yawning gulf, some sudden danger? It is

that we may repent. Does He send death's arrows flying thickly around us, cutting down those near and dear to us? It is that we may repent. Does He send sickness, or misfortune or adversity? It is that we may learn our dependence, our frailty, the fleeting character of earthly good, and wean our hearts away from earthly idols.

PERSUADED BY THE WORD.

Further, He seeks to persuade us by His Word, written and spoken; by the prayers and songs of His people; by the ringing of church bells, the heavenward pointing of church steeples, the voices of preachers, and Sunday School teachers. He awakens the voice of our own conscience, until its imperious "ought" reverberates in the temple of the soul, as though the long dead thunders of Sinai had risen from their age long slumbers. And all these batteries are turned upon the central citadel of the human will. That is, in the last analysis, the one thing that stands between the sinner and salvation. If that yields, heaven is won, and the soul is saved. If the will stouts it out, the soul and all is lost. It is said to be an easy

thing to be lost! But the sinner who goes down to perdition despite all these influences that go out from the heart of God, must fight his way against all the angels of his better self, against all that is holy and good, down to perdition. It is a fight at fearful odds, but alas! many win even in this unequal battle, and lose their all.

As Doctor Parker says:

The salvation of men is the supreme difficulty of God. Jesus Christ said: Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life. The great difficulty is to do right in any way. The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint. Through and through, up and down, we are wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; the right hand is crippled, and the left hand withered; and the head is guilty, and the heart irregular, and the foot skilled in going backward. What wonder when the grand climax, the sovereign appeal, is reached to surrender to God and love Him, that we come upon the supreme difficulty!

CHAPTER V.

CONDITIONS OF SALVATION (Continued)

EVANGELICAL REPENTANCE AND SAVING FAITH.

Now to the heart that yields at this critical point, there is but a step to the first great condition of salvation namely, repentance. The heart that yields, melts; the heart that resists, hardens. Repentance is the first vital condition of salvation. There is no salvation without it. Repent ye! This was the initial demand of the Gospel age. It was taken up by John the Baptist in the wilderness. It was the burden of all his preaching, the meaning and purpose of his rite of baptism. It was the one message of that greatest of all prophets, the Savior's forerunner. It was the one thing that could prepare the people for the coming of the Savior. It is ever so. He can come only to those who thus prepare the way before Him. The disciples took up the same message (Mk. 6:12; Acts 26:20). "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish (Luke 13:3). Repent ye therefore, and be converted that your sins may

be blotted out, etc., (Acts 3:19). God commandeth all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). Paul ever testified both to Jews and also to Greeks, repentance to God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21).

But what is Evangelical repentance? As to its origin, it is divinely wrought. It does not spring from our own native impulses, nor is it the work of our own will, except passively, and that, by the help of the Holy Spirit.

As to its nature it contains three prime elements, sorrow for sin, confession of sin, and breaking off from sin.

REPENTANCE.

The best definition of repentance in the Word of God is found in 2 Cor. 7:10, where Paul says: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of." It is not that flippant regret of a criminal at being found out, or that hypocritical sorrow whose tears are an intended appeal for clemency or the sorrow of the fear of punishment. It is a godly sorrow, thoroughly sincere, the result of yielding to conviction; the effect upon the

soul of an adequate recognition of the sinfulness of sin, and the loathsomeness of our own individual sin. It is a deep, sincere regret at having committed wrong. It is an acknowledgement of guilt, a confession of blameworthiness. It is sorrow for sin in itself. If this sorrow be wrought by the Holy Spirit it will be in the right motive. It will more than likely break open the fountain of tears. Why should we not weep over our sins? Is it in any sense an unworthy emotionalism? Our Savior wept and groaned, and sweat as it were great drops of blood, *for our sins!* Should we refuse to weep over our own sins? Should we not rather be ashamed not to weep? He shed His blood, and are we loath to shed our tears? One thing is sure: so long as we are not full of sorrow for sin, we are not in any condition to receive salvation, nor have we any promise. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise (Psa. 51:17).

There must also be a confession of sin. This not necessarily to men, but unto God. For with the mouth confession is made unto salva-

tion (Rom. 10:10). If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness 1 Jno. 1:9). We need to come before God in the spirit of the publican: God be merciful to me, a sinner (Luke 18:13), in the spirit of the fifty-first Psalm: I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight (Psa. 51:3, 4); in the spirit of the prodigal son, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight (Luke 15:21). It is an essential self-surrender, to acknowledge ourselves guilty before God. A plea of guilty must precede a pardon.

But the essential element of repentance, ethically considered, is the turning right about face, the breaking off from sin. This is, in reality, the human side or element of conversion. It is not enough to weep and make confession: We must stop sinning. Sin is the thing that stands in the way of salvation, while it is everything also that makes salvation necessary. Therefore ceasing to sin is necessarily a condition of salvation. Says Fairchild.

As it is the turning point from sin to holiness; it is called conversion, turning. In this view, and to this extent the change is wholly moral—a voluntary change. The man himself has power to make the change, (by the grace of God,— S. P. S.) and no other being can make it for him. Sin is man's free action; so also is obedience. Thus the Scriptures everywhere hold the sinner responsible for the change.

The demand of the 'Scriptures is summed up in this: Cease to do evil; learn to do well. (Isa. 1:16, 17). Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance (Matt. 3:8; Lk. 3:8). And its practical application is stated in such words as these: "Let him that stole steal no more" (Eph. 4:28). In other words, stop sinning. It is not enough to be sorry for sin, unless we are sorry enough to quit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire (Lk. 3:9). The man who only weeps and confesses, and then goes on in his sinful practices, is not truly penitent. He must stop lying, swearing, stealing, cheating, drinking, and whatever practices he clearly recognizes as sinful.

And if his repentance is genuine, he will do so, for God worketh in him, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Too much stress can-

not be laid on this. There is such a tendency to shallowness and compromise, that it should be emphasized that men must stop sinning, if they expect to be saved from sin. Salvation is not an evolution, but a revolution, not an outward reformation, but an inward transformation. A man cannot be saved from sin, unless in his choice he separates himself from it.

Such a repentance is a change of attitude, which, if it become permanent, involves a change of character. It is a change in the course of life, and leads unto life eternal. “The sorrow of the world worketh death.” (Cor. 9:10). Such was the sorrow of Esau (Heb. 12:17) and of Judas who went out and hanged himself (Mat. 27:5). That is the sorrow of remorse, the hopeless anguish and helpless self-accusation of the lost. That is not repentance unto life.

True evangelical repentance is the real prerequisite of saving faith, and in some senses the only vital condition of salvation. He who is not willing to obey God, is not able to trust Him for salvation. He who does not break away from sin, will not, cannot, believe to the saving of his soul. He who is not truly penitent cannot exercise living faith. Faith is a plant

that grows only in a garden well watered with tears of repentance! It is the outgoing toward God, of the soul that aspires after holiness, and has turned its back upon sin. Indeed, in its simpler, ethical form, it underlies repentance. A man who does not believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, will not exercise repentance toward God.

Again, saving faith may be said to be inseparably linked with repentance. They are different aspects of the same great complex act of the soul. Repentance is turning away from sin, faith is turning toward God. The whole is a complex act of the soul which engages the intellectual, moral, and emotional faculties, and constitutes the greatest voluntary change possible within the range of the human will. But conversion, as to its human elements and responsibilities is not complete until this supreme moral act of the soul has taken place, and the act includes both repentance toward God, and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.

SAVING FAITH.

What then is saving faith? We have come

to one of the great questions of religion. All the way through, religion is a matter of faith. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Let anyone take up his Bible, especially the New Testament and notice how central and continuous and imperative this demand for saving faith is. The word faith in its various meanings and applications occurs two hundred and forty-five times in the Bible, but only twice in the Old Testament, namely, in Deut. 32:20, and Hab. 2:4. Showing how distinctly it is a New Testament idea. Indeed, it is a keyword to Christianity. The words "believe" and "belief" in their various forms, as nouns, verbs and participles occur four hundred and twelve times in the Bible, and unbelief in its various forms twenty-six times. Without faith it is impossible to please God, we are told in Heb. 11:6. Salvation is everywhere made to hinge upon faith. It is therefore, of the utmost consequence, that we know as definitely as possible what is saving faith, although it must be admitted that a few if any who exercise faith, would be able to analize the mental process.

Religious faith, the faith of the Gospel, is the farthest possible removed from superstition,

although it is quite common and popular with shallow thinkers to confound the two and use the two terms synonymously. The religion of Jesus is reasonable, even though it is supernatural. Superstition thinks of the act of faith; faith thinks of its object. Superstition is born of fear; faith is born of love. Superstition is based on imagination; faith is based on reason. Says the venerable George Mattheson :

Faith is not credulity. I have read of the men on Transfiguration Mount, that when they were awake, they saw His glory! Ah! there it is—when they were *awake*. He often gives his beloved sleep—often gives them hypnotic sleep—rest by the mere act of gazing! But in no hypnotic sleep does he exalt, would he accept, an act of *faith*. It is from my *waking* soul, from my reasoning soul, from my prudent and poising and pondering soul that he values the expression of my *faith*.“

And such *waking* faith is crowned with the vision of the Almighty. Human wisdom says: “*Seeing is believing.*” But Jesus said to Martha: “Said I not unto thee, If thou wouldest believe thou shouldest see the glory of God?” Thus faith leads to sight, and hope to fruition. Faith thus becomes the true organ of knowledge, the highest method for the apprehension of truth.

Turning now to the word of God, we find this definition of faith, in Heb. 11:1. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. The Revised Version reads: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen." According to this, faith contains as its principal elements, conviction and assured confidence. It is a conviction of the reality of the thing hoped for or desired, a living confidence that that which is as yet unseen is nevertheless real and becomes a fact of experience. Thus faith in the divine word of promise is equivalent to a demonstration of its truth, so that the mind rests satisfied. Christ says: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. John 3:36. This is repeated many times. The penitent soul rests upon this promise, and is satisfied. Now the Word says: He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believed not the record God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life (1 Jno. 5:10-12).

12). So also Jno. 3:14-18 teaches the same truth. Faith accepts these statements, buttressed as they are by the atonement in Jesus Christ and rests upon them, satisfied that they are true, and that therefore Jesus saves now. The act of faith is like the look of the serpent-bitten Israelites toward the brazen serpent on the pole. They might not be able to see, but they could look! (Num. 21:9; St. Jno. 3:14-15). They might not understand, but if they looked they were to be healed. That was the promise and the experience proved it to be a fact.

Going now a little further we notice:

1. That saving faith is *an act of the will*—that voluntary act of the penitent soul by which we take possession of the blessing and benefits of the atonement through Jesus Christ. It is true, faith is the gift of God, that is, the power to believe is divinely wrought, but even then, a man is responsible for the exercise of that power and gift. We are divinely enabled to believe. Indeed, when the soul is penitently passive in the hands of God, the Spirit of the Lord works an inner conviction of the truth that Jesus saves, but that can only be done where the soul

yields thoroughly to His will, and consents to trust Him implicitly. But such trust involves also an actual surrender of self and a pledge of obedience. The man who wills to repent is also ready and willing to believe. The man who is willing to trust God for salvation, is also willing to obey God, and faith is both. Thus faith is the voluntary act by which the soul *accepts Christ as Savior, and chooses Him as Lord.....*

2. Saving faith is of the heart rather than of the head. Says a great teacher, “Although an act of reason, if reason be taken in the broad sense in which it is synonymous with the human intelligence, faith nevertheless springs out of feeling, and it withers away when the feelings in which it has its root disappear.” It is the response of the soul to a divinely wrought conviction. It is personal in its force, in its source and object, and takes little account of abstract truth as such. It is, therefore, not necessarily connected with any high grade of intellectual power. The ignorant and the weak are as capable of exercising saving faith as are the wise and strong. As the final and sole condition of salvation, this must be so, else it would

not be true that all men, any men, can be saved through Jesus Christ. It does not take great intellect nor great intelligence to obtain salvation, but simple faith, not faith that is contrary to reason, but, as the late Rev. S. Hoy used to say. "faith that is the highest exercise of reason," the sanest evidence of sound reason, and sincerity of purpose.

The exercise of faith is the apprehension of the supernatural. Religious faith always moves in that high realm. It is not contrary to nature, but superior to it. By it alone can men be saved. Says Rev. Dr. Humason, "This world can never reach a condition of peace except through a sensible belief in the supernatural. Men have tried time and again under various styles of nomenclature to find a rest for the soul, but always met with final failure until they rested on the Rock of Ages."

Only here is safety, stability. Only here does the soul find its supreme kinship—in the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Jesus Christ, who is the Sovereign and the substance of the supernatural. Explain it as we will, human experience, as manifested in testimony,

proves the truth that, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. As J. G. Holland beautifully says: "Faith draws the poison from every grief, takes the sting from every loss, and quenches the fire of every pain, and only faith can do it."

PERSONAL CONSECRATION.

3. It is an act of personal consecration and devotion. The ultimate object of faith is not a thing, or even an abstract truth, but a person, and evangelical, saving faith is trust in the Person of the Redeemer, who is presented as the only and sufficient Savior. It is an act of the soul that places us in vital connection with Jesus the Source of saving virtue and power. It puts us in accord with Him, who alone can save. It is, therefore, personal confidence. This is philosophical and reasonable. What causes men to trust in financial institutions and enterprises? It is not only the money in the bank, but the man or men back of it. For no matter how much money there may be in a bank, it is a very uncertain thing if there are not honest and capable men behind it. A

dishonest cashier or president can soon take the money. But we trust the probity, the honor and the ability of the men who conduct the affairs of the institution. So here, we trust in the promises of God, because God is behind them, and because in Jesus Christ they are yea and amen (2 Cor. 1: 20). We trust in the merit of the atonement, because it is derived from the sinless personal perfection and absolute adequacy of the Atoner, Jesus Christ, and because we know that He not only was delivered for our offences, but rose again for our justification, and ever liveth to make intercession for us. It is the greatness of the High Priest and the preciousness of His sacrifice that inspires our confidence. Here is safe ground to rest upon. A person who loves us enough to die for us, can be trusted, relied upon. And so saving faith is a declaration of personal trust, and a pledge of personal loyalty.

It will thus be seen that saving faith is something very much more vital than so-called "historical faith", or theoretical belief. A man may believe the sacred record, even concerning Jesus Christ, that He died to save all men, yet not believe to the saving of his soul.

He may believe all the doctrines of the Bible, the Creed of the Church, yet not be saved, or a whit changed in his moral status. Nor is it the entertaining of certain opinions or notions concerning religion, however sincerely or intelligently held. The word of God gives no ground to say that we are saved by our opinions, or by our sincerity. There is only one Savior, and that is Jesus Christ, the Crucified. There is only one way of salvation, and that is repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. We find no substitute for this. No church, nor creed, nor sacrament, nor service, nor merit, nor opinion, however sincerely we may entertain them or exercise ourselves in them, can save us. Jesus Christ is our only Savior; faith is the only thing that brings His saving power into the soul.

Nor is this an unjust or arbitrary or haphazard arrangement, but it is perfectly reasonable and philosophically adequate.

1. In its inception, saving faith grows out of that sense of utter helplessness which comes with deep consciousness of sinfulness. The sinner sees his helplessness, and feels the hope

lessness of his condition, as regards his own ability. There is only one refuge, one hope set before him, and that is in Jesus. He cannot work out his pardon, nor merit salvation. He can do only one thing, he can trust. He can recognize his helplessness, and confess his dependence, and he can trust Him upon whom alone he is dependent. It is the only thing he can do, but that he can do. Thus the proposition to save him that believeth meets the man at the point of his moral helplessness, and makes his deliverance hinge upon the one thing he is capable of doing. Thus his faith crowns his Savior as Lord of all. Therefore the summons, "Only believe." Thus said Paul to the Philippian jailor: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." (Acts 16:31).

2. The exercise of faith in the all sufficiency of Christ alone for salvation, involves an acknowledgement of the futility of our own righteousness. We abandon all hope and effort to establish our own righteousness. By the deeds of the law shall no man be justified (Rom. 3:20). But Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth (Rom. 10:3). The righteousness which we need and

receive, is by faith. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness (Rom. 10:10). For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor. 5:21). By faith the righteousness of Christ is imparted to us, as well as imputed. Just as in the case of Abraham, our faith is counted unto us for, or as an equivalent of, righteousness (Gal. 3:6). By faith therefore, we say with St. Paul: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). In the words of A. C. Dixon, D. D.: "The waters of God's blessings flow downward, and he who would drink them must stoop. Our faith can never approach God in robes of royalty; sackcloth and ashes are always its paper clothing."

The place for true faith is on its knees before a holy God, weeping tears of penitence for its sins, and rejoicing only in His righteousness.

3. Faith is the yielding and committal of the whole being to Christ. It is the hand that

opens the door into the kingdom where Christ is King, and he who enters that kingdom as a citizen or subject does so by swearing unqualified allegiance to the new King at the threshold of entrance. That pledge is taken in the act of faith, for faith is not only trust in the Savior's power and willingness to save, but an acknowledgement and acceptance of his kingship over the soul and a pledge of obedience to His will. As we have seen, faith is an act of the will, and therefore absolutely incompatible with rebellion against God. Thus the relation of perfect and loving union between Christ and the soul is established, in which we are to continue the rest of our days. For the initial act of faith, becomes the life of faith in vital union with Christ.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION.

Thus far we have shown what provision God has made for our salvation, what we must do to be saved, and how Divine grace assists us in doing that which is required of us. That brings us to the end of what we can do. What now occurs? What is God's response to this appeal of faith from a truly penitent heart? The Scriptures plainly teach that the result is the experience of salvation, personal, immediate, conscious. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth (Rom. 1:16). It is, therefore, our next duty to state what is embraced in this experience which comes into our consciousness at the point of saving faith, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CONVERSION.

Let it be noted that while several very important elements enter into this experience, it is, in reality, but one experience which, to use a comprehensive term, we properly call *con-*

version. This term, however, includes both the human and divine elements. It describes the process and experience by which a sinner becomes a Christian. The human element in this process has been stated in the preceding chapter. The Divine, we take up in this. And in order to do this intelligently, we are obliged to take up the various phases separately, in the order of thought, always remembering that they occur, so far as our consciousness of the fact can distinguish, at one and the same time, and constitute one experience, the experience of conversion or salvation from sin.

JUSTIFICATION.

First in the order of thought is pardon or justification.

1. This is the judicial act of God the Father by which the penitent sinner who believes on Jesus Christ is freely forgiven, his punishment remitted, and his guilt removed, for the sake of Jesus Christ, whose atoning merit is a satisfaction to the justice of God, in our behalf.

(2) The act of God by which we are made righteous through faith in Christ.

By the atonement provision has been made for the payment of our debt, incurred by sin. In response to faith the debt of the individual sinner is cancelled, and he is treated as though he had not sinned. The righteousness of Christ is not only imputed, however, but imparted, or transferred to him that believeth. Two things are to be noted. First, the blameworthiness or guilt incurred by transgression, is removed. The sentence of the law has been satisfied in Christ. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth (Rom. 10:4). Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us (Gal. 3:13). By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life (Rom. 5:18).

REMOVAL OF THE SENSE OF GUILT.

Second, the *sense* of guilt, or the experience of condemnation which the impenitent sinner always carries, and which becomes so acute in conviction, is removed. There is therefore, now, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1). He that believeth

on Him (the Son of God) is not condemned (St. Jno. 3:18). Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ—and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Rom. 5:1, 2). The Psalmist therefore well says, Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity (Psa. 32:1, 2). This indeed is a wonderful blessing, and the consciousness of it, which is so plainly taught in the above passages, is precious beyond measure. To feel the burden slip from the soul, that has for so long been like a galling yoke, and to realize that, having come into living union with Christ, we have been made free from the yoke of bondage, free from the guilt of sin, free from the condemnatory sentence of the law, this is an inestimable blessing—a joy unspeakable and full of glory. How pure the joy of the hope which it inspires! How sweet and abiding the peace which thus comes flowing into the soul. Peace like a river, and righteousness like the waves of the sea!

The promises of God are abundant and

sweeping. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon (Isa. 55:7). I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts—for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more (Jer. 31:33, 35). And I will cleanse them from their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned (Jer. 33:8). In those days, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them (Jer. 50:20). Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity? (Mic. 7:1). Through his name whosoever believeth in Him shall have remission of sins (Acts 10:43). Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be as crimson, they shall be as wool (Isa. 1:18). Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities (Psa. 103:1-3). As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us (Psa. 103:12). For

thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back (Psa. 38:17). I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins (Psa. 43:25). Having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances which was against us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:13-14).

Thus we might go on, citing promises that express not only the fact of forgiveness, actual forgiveness, but the scope of Divine pardon extending to the utmost limit of human guilt. "*All sin*," "*blot out*," "*cast them behind thy back*," "*as far the east is from the west*,"—does anybody know how far that is? No! But we know it is far enough! Blotted out? Then they are invisible! The record can never be restored. It has been erased. The blood covers it. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin.

This forgiveness is eternal. The decree is irrevocable, so far as the sins of the past are concerned. It is very, very real. It is not only a forgiveness in the mind of God, and in the archives of His government, but in the con-

sciousness and heart of the pardoned sinner. From the Holy of Holies, where Christ sitteth, down into the holy of holies of our being this great miracle of grace goes forth. The problem is solved, the deed is done. God is just, yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

Commenting on the words in Isa. 1:18: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Charles H. Spurgeon says: "I have heard of a certain divine that he used always to carry with him a little book. This tiny volume had only three leaves in it; and, truth to tell, it contained not a single word. The first was a leaf of black paper, black as jet; the next was a leaf of red — scarlet; and the last was a leaf of white, without spot. Day by day, he would look upon this singular book, and at last he told the secret of what it meant. He said: "Here is the black leaf, that is my sin, and the wrath of God, which my sin deserves; I look and look, and think it is not half black enough to represent my guilt, though it is as black as black can be. The red leaf reminds me of the atoning sacri-

fice and the precious blood; and I delight to look at it, and weep, and look at it again. The white leaf represents my soul as it is washed in Jesus' blood and made white as snow."

Justification includes the vital fact of forgiveness. As a forensic or law term it simply stands for a judicial act declaring a person right with the law. But that is not enough. To declare a man righteous when he is not, would be a fraud. A sinner must be made righteous. Therefore the necessity of forgiveness. To justify the sinner, then, includes all this. On the ground of the atonement, through the blood of Christ, by faith in his name, we are absolved, discharged and relieved from deserved wrath and punishment, and admitted into the privileges and rewards of the righteous, for the sake of Jesus our substitute.

This blessing can be bestowed only upon sinners. Therefore Jesus said, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (Matt. 9:12, 13). This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief (1 Tim. 1:15).

It is a work done for us; *instantaneously* the whole work is done; it is all of grace, solely upon the ground of atonement, and only by faith.

Another definition: It is the reversal of God's attitude toward the sinner, because of the changed attitude of the sinner toward God. Its elements are, (1) remission of punishment, (2) restoration to favor. Both on the ground of the meritorious righteousness of Christ.

This act of justification is not an arbitrary act going out from the sovereign authority of God, alone, but performed in perfect harmony with the plan of God. By that plan our sins and guilt were laid on Jesus Christ, who voluntarily bore our sins in his own body on the tree and therefore, by faith in Him, His righteousness is reckoned in our favor. Not by works, lest anyone should boast, but by a penitent renunciation on our part of all claim to salvation to ourselves, or anyone else but Christ. In abundant mercy, Christ, who made provision for this very thing, remits our debt, thus bringing peace. The sacrifice of Christ is the satisfaction of justice for human sin.

That satisfaction, and that alone is the ground of forgiveness.

REGENERATION.

But all this would not suffice for our salvation, having reference only to the sins that are past. It leaves the heart with its evil tendency, its “bent to sinning.” What relief therefore would it be to have all my past sins blotted out, giving me a clear balance sheet with which to begin anew? For I should naturally go on in the same old way, hating God, rejecting Christ, refusing obedience, beginning a new catalogue of transgressions. Something must be done within us. My evil heart, deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked must be changed, renewed, before I can begin the life of the Spirit. Hence the necessity of regeneration, or the new birth. With wonderfully solemn emphasis our Savior said to Nicodemus: “Ye must be born again” (St. John 3:7). The emphasis is laid upon the verb “must”—an imperative, eternal, unalterable *must*. But it is not an arbitrary *must*. It is not that God has simply chosen to set down this rule, but the reason for it lies deeply imbedded

in the nature of things. The Savior's own statement is, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (St. John 3:3). And the reason? "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit" (St. John 3:6). That is the philosophy of the situation. The apostle declares, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they must be spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2:14). One must have eyes adapted to spiritual light. One must have a nature adapted to the environment in which he is placed.

If we want to live in the spirit, we must be born of the Spirit. If we want to live in the heavenlies, we must be born from above. There is only one gate-way into the kingdom of God, and that is the new birth. We must be born into it. There is no need to object; it will do no good to seek to evade it. There is heaven! All its twelve gates are open wide! Go in! Go into its superb company of angels and spirits of just men made perfect; go into the presence of the Lord of Hosts; enter into the joy of the Lord! Ah! It cannot

be done, except by being born from above. Otherwise we could not live in that atmosphere. Like a fish out of water, we should surely die.

Our Savior teaches the same lesson when He says: Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? (St. Matt. 7:16). Make the tree good. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit (St. Matt. 7:18). The fountain must be sweet if it is to pour forth sweet water. It is simply an application of the law of cause and effect. The effect will proclaim its cause.

This necessity of a new birth applies equally to all men, for all have gone astray, all have come short of the glory of God, all have come very far short of original righteousness. There is no difference between the moralist, and the reckless sinner, between the respectable, self-righteous Pharisee, and the openly dissipated publican. Both alike need the new birth. No matter what degree of culture we may have, whether we be savage or highly civilized, we must be born again. The new birth is a change of *heart*. Out of *it* are the issues of life. As

a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. The heart, (of the unregenerate) is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it? The refined and moral may be harder to convince of their innate wickedness than the debauchee, but this does not alter the truth.

Sin, when it is traced to its root principle, is found to be selfishness. The man who lives for pleasure, who indulges his appetite and passions, does so for the purpose of self-gratification. He who on the other hand leads an outwardly moral life, but refuses to yield his will and heart and life to God, is as surely ruled by the motive of selfishness. Ambition, avarice, pride of station, as well as lust and passion, are manifestations of that central principle of depravity, selfishness. The unregenerate life is self centered, self absorbed. It views everything from the standpoint of self-interest. The man is an egotist, consciously or unconsciously. He treats himself as the center of the universe. All things exist for his benefit, all must contribute to his welfare. He yields to nothing and to no one, save in the spirit of selfishness, and with the hope of self-aggrandizement. To gratify selfish desire, or

accomplish selfish purpose, he will grovel in the mire, dig in the earth, abandon principle, violate law, human and Divine, trample heedlessly upon the rights of others, ride ruthlessly over the interests of his fellows, crushing their hearts, ruining their lives. He must have his way. Everything must bend to his pleasure. He is an individual octopus, with a thousand serpentine coils reaching out in all directions, and laying everything under tribute. No wonder the Savior says: “Marvel not that I say unto you ‘Ye must be born again.’” (St. Jno. 3:7).

LOVE THE ANTIDOTE FOR SIN.

The only cure for selfishness, is its opposite, love, which is but a positive conception of unselfishness. The love of God must therefore be shed abroad in the heart. The law demands that thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself (St. Matt. 22:37-39). No man can do that out of the impulses or powers of his unregenerated heart. Love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:10). Love your enemies. This is the higher requirements of the New Testament.

But every man who knows his own heart instantly responds: "I cannot. And what is worse, I do not care to do so, I have no disposition to love God or my neighbor. I love myself. I look out for number one." Does God then require an impossibility? Verily not! But when God commands, He also enables. Therefore God says: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be to me a people (Heb. 8:10) (Jer. 31:33) (Cor. 3:3). God must and will establish His law of love in the heart of the believer, and He sets up within us His reign of righteousness and peace. Only so can we love God and keep His law. Therefore the necessity of the new birth. There is no use to exhort a man to begin to love God, or to learn to love Him. He cannot do it. A man must be born from above. The love of God, which is the central principle of the spiritual life in Jesus, must be implanted in the soul. This love is the antidote for sin which is selfishness, and surely supplants it. THIS IS THE DYNAMIC OF RELIGION. THIS IS THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL.—THE POWER OF LOVE. For love is of God, and God is love,

and a man must dwell in God, and God, whose love is the central source of all energy, must dwell in him. Then he is a Christian, and can live a Christian life.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

But we have no special responsibility in this matter, except to yield ourselves utterly to God, and submit to the operations of His grace and Spirit. The penitent soul that comes believing in Jesus, trusts utterly in Him, in this also, and is passive in His hand,—as the clay in the potter's hand. The work of regeneration is purely the work of the Holy Spirit. It is a supernatural work, a miracle of grace. The Spirit of God, as the executive of the God-head is in the world verifying the declaration of the Scripture, “Behold I make all things new.” He begins that renewing process, by renewing the hearts of men who believe in Jesus. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he hath shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior (Tit. 3:5, 6). Everywhere the Holy Spirit is described as the energy by which

we are born again, through the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever (1 Pet. 1:23). The teaching of Scripture plainly is that the new birth is solely the work of the Holy Spirit wrought in him that believes in Jesus Christ to the saving of the soul.

Now what takes place when one is born again? The definitions have been so various, and the subject is so broadly treated in the Word of God, and under so many different figures, that it is not easy to give a brief, yet adequate statement.

1. Regeneration means "to be born again." It is that moral restoration by which a person becomes a child of God, a renewal of our fallen nature, whereby we are delivered from the power of sin, so that we are empowered to love God, and serve Him with affection. It is the impartation of the perfect principle of spiritual life in Christ Jesus, by which we are saved from the reigning power of sin. It is the inception of a new life, by Divine communication, a re-creation in the image of God. As the depravity which infects our whole nature is trans-

mitted by natural generation, so through regeneration we are transformed into a moral likeness of God by the Holy Spirit. All life is the result of generation. All spiritual life is the result of the new birth.

Doctor Watson defined it as “that mighty change wrought in man by the Holy Spirit by which the dominion which sin has over him in his natural state, is broken and abolished; so that with full choice of will and the energy of right affection he serves God freely.”

The Scriptures are most explicit and simple. In Jesus Christ, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature (Gal. 6:15). Therefore, if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; old things have passed away, behold all things are become new. (2 Cor. 5:17). For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (Rom. 8:2). That ye put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your minds; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:22-24). I

will put a new spirit within you, and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh (Ezek. 11:19).

Scripture phrases are most emphatic. "Born again." (St. John 3:3-7) (1 Pet. 1:23). "Born of water and the Spirit," (St. Jno. 3:5). "Born of God." (1 Jno. 5:1; St. Jno. 1:13; 1 Jno. 3:9). "Passed from death unto life." (1 Jno. 3:14; St. Jno. 5:24). "The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." (Tit. 3:5). "Quickened." (Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13). "Dead with Christ." (Col. 2:20). "Risen with Christ." (Col. 3:1). "Power to become the Sons of God." (St. Jno. 1:12). "Born after the Spirit." (St. Jno. 3:8).

2. The Scriptures teach that in regeneration we are passive, although we have been brought to this point by our active co-operation with God in repentance and faith. The Holy Spirit alone has power to create anew in Christ Jesus. It is not by development, or evolution, or reformation, but by the power of the Holy Ghost, coming into the soul through the medium of faith.

3. It is an instantaneous work. A gradual

new birth is an absurdity. In the nature of things such a change is wrought in an instant, although the consciousness of it may come gradually. On the day of Pentecost three thousand persons were converted in a very short time. Saul of Tarsus was instantly changed from a zealous persecutor, to an humble, obedient disciple.

4. The change thus wrought is three fold.

First it is a change of mind, or understanding. In regeneration the mental viewpoint is changed. The converted soul reads all things earthly and spiritual in a new light. He has the gift of spiritual discernment. He becomes capable of receiving the truth of God, "the truth as it is in Jesus." The Word of God becomes a new book. Truth has a new meaning, the soul a new outlook. It is like going with Moses to Mount Pisgah, and gaining a clear view of the land of promise, our privileges in Christ Jesus. (1 Cor. 2:9-14).

Second, it is a change of purpose, or will. By it the will is emancipated from the bondage of sin, and empowered to choose obedience to the law of God, in love. In regeneration the Spirit of God *worketh in us both to will and*

to do of his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13). The unregenerate inclines to that which is evil, and either chooses that which is wrong, or finds itself unable to carry out the better impulses and convictions which are felt. (Rom. 7:18). But the regenerate soul chooses God and prefers His service.

Third, it is a change in the affections. The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed, can be. (Rom. 8:7). They that are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom. 8:8). But the regenerated soul, being born of the Spirit and having the life of Christ implanted within, is enabled truly to love God. There is a complete revolution in this respect. Then we loved sin and hated God, now we love God and hate sin. The whole tendency of the life is reversed. The current of the affections runs in a new and godly channel. We love God, we love His law, His people, His cause, His ways, His word. Indeed, the life of the truly regenerate is a life of love, not a perfect love, but a growing love, a love that grows in purity, in fervor, in strength, in scope. It is a life in the Spirit, and not in the flesh. The springs of such a life

are in God. The Spirit has come to abide within, and it becomes in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life (St. Jno. 4:14; 7:37, 38).

REGENERATION AND JUSTIFICATION.

5. There is a very close relation between regeneration and justification, yet also a sharp contrast. Justification is a work done for us, regeneration a work done within us. The first changes our relation to God and our standing before Him, the latter our moral and spiritual condition. In justification we are pardoned, in regeneration renewed. We are never justified without at the same time being regenerated also. Nor are we ever regenerated without also being justified. Each is distinct and perfect in itself, after its kind, yet the two together constitute the essential experience of a change of heart. Both occur simultaneously, both through faith in Jesus Christ.

ADOPTION AND ASSURANCE.

Having been thus restored to Divine favor by the pardon of our sins, and to His image by the new birth, we are properly received into the family of God, and admitted into all the

privileges and rights of children. This is called adoption. We are born of God, and then installed into the heavenly family. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see Him as He is (1 Jno. 3: 1, 2). But as many as received Him, to them gave He power (or the right) to become the sons of God (1 Jno. 1.12). For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption (or of sonship), whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. (Rom. 8:14-17). God sent forth his son — that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the

spirit of his son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant (slave) but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal. 4:4-7).—In the following portion of the fourth chapter of Galatians the Apostle Paul shows, by a beautiful interpretation of an allegory, drawn from real history, that we are free born, the children of promise, and exhorts us (Chap. 5:1) "to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." "For if the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (St. Jno. 8:36).

These passages indicate both the fact of adoption and the concomitant blessings. 1. Access to God in prayer. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him (1 Jno. 3:21). 2. Access also to the grace wherein we stand (Rom. 5:2). 3. Inheritance (Rom. 8:14-17). 4. Hope of glory. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God — "and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us (Rom.

5:2-5). Which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil" (Heb. 6:19). 5. The indwelling of the Spirit of God (Rom. 8. 9, 11). He guides into all truth; He teaches us all things; He maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. 6. All the inestimable blessings of Gospel grace in growing abundance, and inexhaustible fullness, even unto perfect love, and complete victory over all sin.

All this is sealed to us in our perfect consciousness, unto perfect assurance. There is no need of our being in permanent doubt as to our conversion. We become self-conscious as Christians, just as clearly as we are self-conscious as individuals. The Word of God assures us of this, and gives us in unmistakable language the criteria by which we may know.

1. By our faith itself. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Heb. 11:1). Faith is the evidence. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself (1. Jno. 5:10).

2. By the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

“The Spirit himself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God (Rom. 8:16). Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our heart 2. Cor. 1:22). In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory (Eph. 1:13, 14) (So also 2. Cor. 5:5). And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth” (1 Jno. 5:6). Compare also, Rom. 8:15, and Gal. 4:6, already quoted above.

3. By the fact that we love God and His people. “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren (1 Jno. 3:14). And hereby (viz. by loving in deed and in truth) we know that we are in the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him (1 Jno. 5:19). Every one that loveth is born of God” (1 Jno. 4:7).

4. By the life which we live. “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not (1 Jno. 5:18)

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God (1 Jno. 3:9). And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever (Isa. 32:17). That their heart may be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ" (Col. 2:3).

Thus the Word of God gives us many ways by which we may know our standing before God. The Lord does not want us to be in doubt. Uncertainty as to our experience cuts the nerve of our enthusiasm for service, and destroys the incentive to faithfulness. Certainty makes us strong and bold and confident. Therefore let us not be content until we have this testimony, this evidence of the faith that overcomes the world.

SANCTIFICATION.

This is the scope of the experience by which we become the children of God. It is the pro-

foundest, most radical experience which is possible to us. It is the beginning of a renewed soul, a new life, the foundation of a new destiny. It is glorious to become a Christian. It is a great thing to become a child of God.

In this experience, as outlined in this chapter, the life of holiness is begun, and the experience of holiness is inaugurated. The child of God is holy. Holiness is begun. And the work of Conversion, so wrought, *is perfect*. It does all that God intended it should do. It is not Christian perfection, but it is the perfect beginning of that which is to be made perfect, in the experience of entire sanctification. The child is perfect—as a child, but not as a man. There is before the new-born child of God the possibility, even the necessity of perfect cleansing from all sin, of perfect love, of perfect maturity of character—a state of *graece*, where faith is without any mixture of doubt, whose love is without alloy, and whose hope is undimmed by earthliness.

Entire sanctification is a process which results in a state of holiness, in which we are delivered from all sinful affections and desires,

and are kept in the love of God, having complete victory over all sin within and without, from day to day. This is a state of grace which we attain after conversion, but in this life, and which we may attain long before we die. Its attainment and our continuance therein constitute a large factor in our Christian experience and in the exercise of the Christian life.

Every truly converted soul longs to be perfectly holy. All life tends toward maturity. All growth is a promise and prophecy of perfection. "Everyone that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (1 Jno. 3:3). God dwells in us, and God is holy. Inevitably, therefore, we want to be like God, whom we love, holy.

All the exhortations of Christ and His apostles to seek perfection in holiness are addressed to the children of God. "Be perfect" said Jesus in Matt. 5:48. Paul prayed that the God of peace might "sanctify you wholly, and your whole spirit and soul and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. 5:23). This in-

dicates that the children of God are not perfect, but that they are to go on unto perfection, (Heb. 6:1) perfection of experience, perfection of love, perfection of purity. They are later to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14). "Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 7:1). "Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things unto him which is the head, even Christ." (Eph. 4:13-15 et seq.) "Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should

be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:25-27). "If we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 Jno. 1:7). All these passages indicate that the Christian life tends to perfect holiness, that holiness is essential to a perfect Christian character, and that character tends to permanence. Holiness fits us for fellowship with God, and for obedience and service. It prepares for Heaven, which is a holy place for a holy people.

The sooner this state of grace is attained, the greater our security,—the surer our hold on heaven, the larger and deeper our joy in Jesus, and the fuller and clearer our knowledge of divine things, and the more complete our victory over sin. The holy soul has the abundant life. The holy soul is fitted for the fulness of Pentecostal blessing, the highest equipment both for enjoyment and service. The holy soul has easier victory over temptation, readier access to God in prayer, greater liberty in the Spirit.

This glorious state also constitutes the condition of true growth and progress in the divine life.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

Such is the process by which the soul passes from death unto life, from the power of sin and Satan unto God, is translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and enters into the fulness of His grace and love. What now? Is the soul saved? Yes. Saved forever and finally? That depends. Religion is a life; life means growth, growth means ultimate perfection, and moral perfection is a heavenly characteristic. What is heaven? Surely it is something more than merely a place, a city, with streets of gold, flooded with light, full of music and song, and languid, restful millions. Heaven is the paradise of perfection, perfection of character, perfection of conformity to God, perfection of communion with Him. It is the final state and estate of the soul. It is the sum and culmination of all that salvation implies and achieves. This life is a preparation for it. The burden of the Christian life, in its personal aspects, is the maturing

of character for the heavenly world, the preparation of the soul for the eternal kingdom. So God's way of salvation embraces not only conversion, but sanctification, eternal redemption, eternal and complete fitness for the heavenly world.

HOLINESS.

The one word that characterizes most fully the quality that fits us for heaven, is holiness, or Christian perfection. Be ye holy, for I am holy, saith the Lord. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. Follow after holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. These are the Divine injunctions, and this is the Divine ideal. There is no perfection for man except the perfect work of grace, in which the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin, and in which the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts in such a measure that we are enabled to love God with all the heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. This is the only perfection possible, and it is all of grace, not of works, lest any man should boast. This state of perfect love and perfect purity, is obtained by faith in

Jesus, and as a result of walking in the light. So is the prayer of Paul (1 Thess. 5:23) fulfilled in us, namely: The very God of peace sanctifies us wholly, and our whole spirit, soul and body is preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

PROGRESS.

There is therefore the need of cultivating the spiritual life, nourishing, feeding, strengthening, completing that work of grace begun in our hearts. The tender twig must become a tree, hardy and rugged. The child must become a man, matured and fit for service. The recruit must become a good soldier enduring hardness. The soul, having turned toward heaven, must go on unto perfection, not remaining forever in the rudiments of religion. Onward, ever onward, is the motto. This is a requirement of life itself. We must go on, unto perfection, or go back to perdition. We must grow and advance, or we must die. There is no standing still. The very law of life forbids it.

It is therefore supremely important to

cultivate the spiritual life. For this there are three great means.

1. The study of the word of God. All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16). Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. (Luke 4:4). The prayerful study of the Word of God, for devotional purposes is one of the chief and vital means for the cultivation of the spiritual life. God is in His word. By the exceeding great and precious promises, therefore, we are made partakers of the Divine nature. God lives in His word. It reveals His inmost purpose of grace. This word, therefore, should be to the child of God more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honey comb. In keeping of the Lord's statutes there is a great reward. Blessed is he who can say with the Psalmist: "Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee."

No other literature can take the place of

the Bible as a means of cultivating the spiritual life. Here is pure nourishment for the soul, and no poison. Here faith is strengthened, zeal inspired, love kindled, conscience quickened, judgment enlightened. Here is the armory of truth. Here are the shields of mighty men. Mr. Moody says: “When I pray, I am talking to God, but when I study my Bible, God is talking to me; and it is really more important that God should talk to me, than that I should talk to Him.”

And this saying is worth heeding.

2. Prayer. Next to the study of the Word of God, prayer is of most vital importance as a means of grace.

“Prayer is the Christian’s vital breath,
The Christian’s native air;
His watchword at the gate of death,
He enters heaven with prayer.”

A Christian can no more maintain his Christian vitality without prayer, than a man can live without breathing. God environs the soul, as the air enwraps the body. In Him we live, move, and have our being. He is as vital to the spiritual life as the atmosphere to the physical. In praying, we breathe in God,

and the more healthful, strong and steady in our praying, the fuller are the vital forces we inspire. We pray ourselves full of God, and at the same time, it is on the breath of prayer, that we breathe ourselves out, until we are emptied of self and filled with God.

Prayer is the essential element of communion with God, upon which our spiritual life depends. Now, true prayer is divinely inspired. The Spirit himself makes intercession for us. For we ourselves know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit indites our petition, and when God thus in-breathes a prayer, it is surely according to His will, and we therefore know that we have the petition that we desire of Him. The God inspired prayer is answered in advance in the counsels of God. And the soul that is full of prayer is full of God, full of blessing, full of life, full of victory over sin, full of the Spirit of Holiness. The soul that prays without ceasing, will become God-intoxicated. Daily prayer, secret prayer, family prayer, and prayer in the assemblies of the saints, is essential to the maintenance and cultivation of the spiritual life.

3. Serving the Lord in the salvation of

others. There is no surer way to lose the soul, than to be careless about others. There is no surer way to save one's own soul than to save others. The soul that has no passion for souls, is dying or dead. God in the soul imparts the desire to save others. This is inevitable. We can not make sure of heaven any better way, than to make heaven sure for others. This is the genius of the Gospel. Men are saved through saved men. We are saved to save others. That is why God continues us here in this world, not only to give us time to mature as Christians, but to work in His vineyard. If, as some suppose, the only purpose of our salvation were to get us into heaven, the most reasonable thing God could do would be to take us to heaven right away. But Jesus said in His high priestly prayer, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." It is not only that we may get to heaven, but that we may be the means of saving as many others as possible. If we are good people, saved from sin, there is no place in the universe where we are so much needed as in this world, full of sinners as it is. We are not urgently needed in heaven. But

this great multitude of sinners about us, our brothers and sisters, are perishing and need salvation. It is for us to bring them to the Savior.

There are in our own country nearly fifty millions who do not even profess to be saved. Statistics show that only twenty-nine million, or 33 per cent of our country nominally espouse Christianity. All the rest are without God, and without hope in this world. Two thirds of the human race, or one billion of the billion and a half estimated population of the globe are without the light of the Gospel. They are dying, a million a month in China alone, without God, says J. Hudson Taylor. And Christ died for them all.

“Can we whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Can we to souls benighted
The Lamp of Life deny?”

Can we who profess to have the love of God burning in our souls, be content while the others perish?

If this is so, verily how dwelleth the love of God in us? How can we hope to save ourselves, if we do nothing, suffer nothing, give nothing to save others? Surely, nothing can more

strengthen us in our Christian life, nothing can more surely deepen our experience, and establish us in grace, than to be full of eager, restless, insatiable passion for the souls of dying men, which constrains us to go after them, and win them to Christ and for Him.

CHAPTER VIII.

HEAVEN—ETERNAL LIFE.

It would be worth while to seek Christ, and live the life of the Spirit, if there were no hereafter. For the peace and the joy we have in the Holy Ghost are indescribably precious—joy unspeakable and full of glory, peace that flows like a river. The Christian's life is not all sunshine, but it is an abundant life, full of triumphant possibilities, in this world. It is not all crosses and losses, and yoke bearing. It is full of abiding inspirations, and marvellous delights.

But the true value and meaning of the religious life is in its relation to the world beyond. All the mighty plan of salvation could mean but little were it not that human life sweeps through the eternities. Immortality is the only thing that makes it worth while to redeem the race. It is man's relation to the life beyond the grave, that gives meaning to all the wondrous plan of salvation, offers the key to man's tremendous destiny and throws

an environment of infinity around his responsibilities. All our acts and choices have a bearing on the eternal. Our life overleaps the boundaries of time and space, and, as our spiritual nature rises superior to our physical, in its powers and possibilities, as well as its essence, it reveals our kinship with the things that are spiritual and eternal.

Conscience, intelligent aspiration, the possibility of endless development, the expanding power of the mind, the solemn forebodings of the soul, all argue the immortality of man, the indestructibility of the human spirit.

The outcome of all religious life and experience is character. Character tends to permanency. The appeal of all the Scriptures is to the things that endure. And the whole doctrine of the Christian religion culminates in the mighty refrain, “forever and forever,” repeated again and again, amid the far-flashing splendors into which the redeemed soul is translated. That refrain rolls on and on, and reverberates with increasing volume through prophecy and psalm and apocalypse. It is this alluring outlook that girds the soul and en-

raptures the spirit at the thought of the future. It is the dread of an eternal future of darkness and death that should deter the soul from going on in the way of sin that leads from God, and light and love and peace and hope and bliss.

For the soul *must* live forever, either in heaven or in hell. “Forever and ever,” covers both worlds. These waves beat on, which ever way they roll. If heaven is eternal, hell is eternal. If life is eternal, death is eternal. “Eternal life” is no more scriptural than eternal death. “Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.” (Matt. 25: 41). “And these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matt. 25: 46.) The same Greek word occurs in both. The “punishment” is “eternal” and the “life” is “eternal.” The South Pole points into the unfathomable depths downward as the North Pole points into the unfathomable heights, upward. “But whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin.” (Mark 3: 29. R. V.) That

is significant. The soul that turns from God chooses death and night. "And that choice goes on forever." He who sins against light, is struck blind. He who fights against God must go down. Evil character also tends to permanence. A man is forever what he determines to be. Hell is as real as Heaven. Each is inevitable. They are the opposite poles of the inexorable nature of things. Hell is the final home of those who have banished God out of their lives, who have chosen to gravitate away from Him who loved them and went to abysmal depths to save them. There is no other way to deal with those who reject the only Savior, and the only way of salvation.

HEAVEN.

Heaven is the final home of the sanctified soul. It is the place toward which the destiny of the redeemed gravitates, the Utopia of light perennial toward which the sin-tired, grief-smitten, sorrowing hearts of men in all ages have turned with longing and hope; against whose battlements there leans the topmost rung of that mystic ladder upon which men ascend to

God. It is the dream of our childhood, the mighty inspiration of pure manhood. It is the one word that sums up to us our highest conception of happiness, the final realization of our purest ideals. Into it are gathered up all that we think of as sweetest and purest and noblest in existence. With it we associate God, the angels, the spirits of just men made perfect, the multitude that no man can number, whose hearts and robes are made pure and white in the blood of the Lamb; the city that lieth foursquare, with the walls of jasper and gates of pearl, and streets of gold; a sunless, starless world of undying daylight; whose atmosphere is redolent with purity and vibrant with the song of the redeemed. Imperishable in splendor, glorious in holiness, full of light and love and God. Here it is that the soul that loves Jesus finds its eternal rest, its abiding place. That is the final outcome of salvation.

Heaven is the dwelling place of God. It is His eternal abode of light. It is the high and holy place of Him that inhabiteth eternity. It is the eternal glory of the universe, where all that is fit to survive is gathered. Its center is

the throne of supreme and universal sovereignty, and the Throne of grace, the dwelling place of God and the Lamb. It is the grand sum of all perfection, the sea in whose bosom all rivers find their eternal level.

Heaven is the dwelling place of the angels that fall not, those spirits of light who are sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation, who always behold the face of God, who bask in His presence, and enjoy His favor.

In short it is the gathering place of all those free beings who have chosen conformity to the will and nature of God. It is the center of freedom and peace, in the sunshine of Jehovah's face.

Yet more. Heaven is the place where the spirits of just men made perfect are in an environment which offers the most unrestrained opportunity for intellectual, moral and spiritual development. In the heavenly state physical limitations, have fallen away, and all those defects of our earthly state have been left behind, so that the soul expands and the restless mind reaches out continually after new realms of truth. The redeemed spirit, under the in-

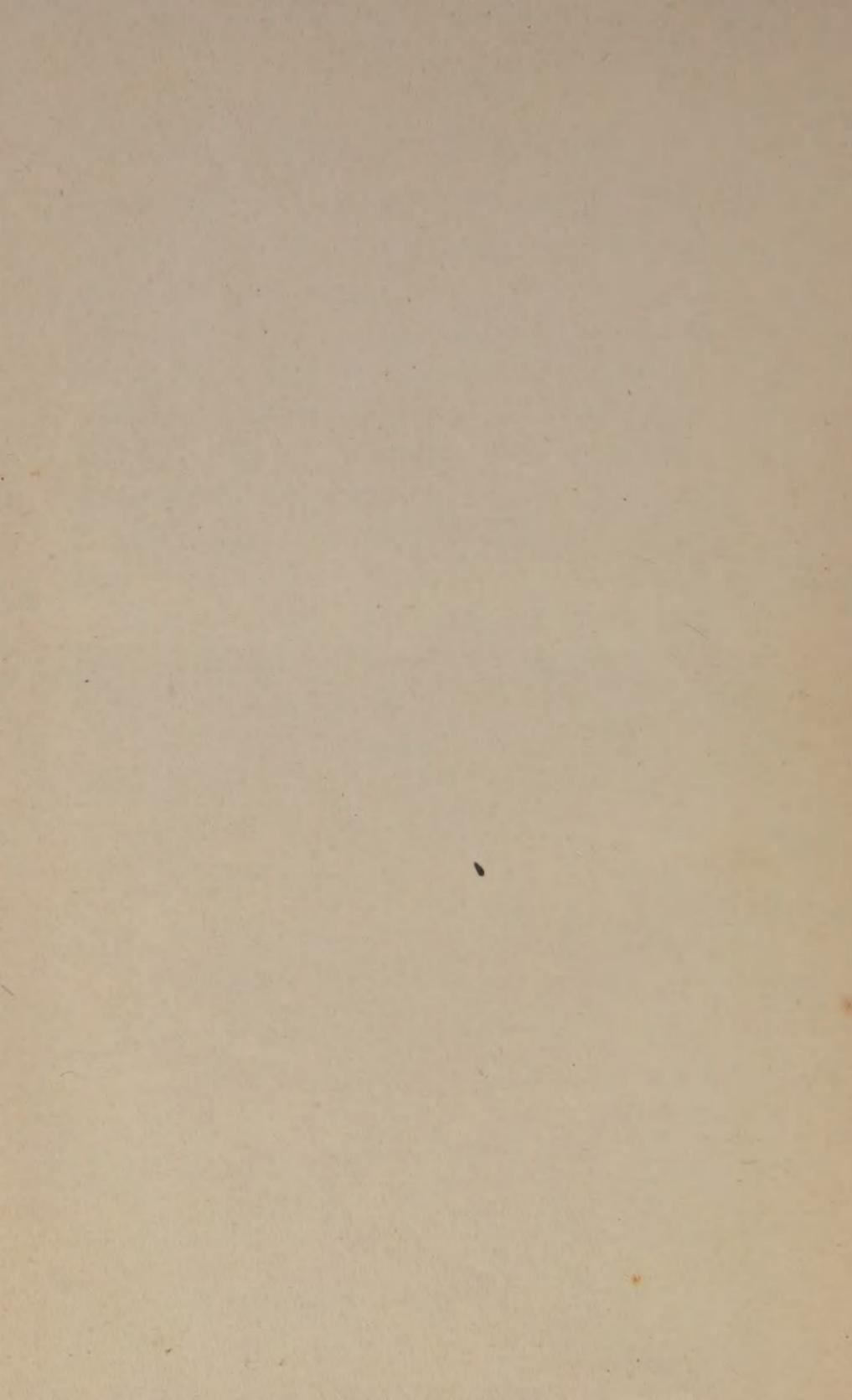
toxicating delight of a perfect environment and perfect adaptation, explores new worlds for conquest. In the sacred presence of Jehovah, whose smile of approval is the highest and holiest that can crown a human life through the grace of God, there comes an increasing likeness to Christ our prototype. Fuller and fuller grows the surging tide of spiritual life and energy that flows through the pure soul that lives in unbroken communion with the Lord. In everything that is pure and noble and god-like, the soul in heaven grows. It is the end of probation, turmoil, weariness, pain, affliction, grief, adversity, heartache, disappointment and sorrow, sickness and death, of trial, test and peril of whatever kind, but it is not the end of growth and life, of activity and progress. Heaven is the land of highest activity and truest progress. Motion, motion, onward, ever onward, these words express the law of that world of light, not stagnation and dead calm.

Into such a state of blessed inspiration and life-giving energy, the Christian finally ripens. He is translated into that land of glory, as the fitting outcome of the redeeming work of Divine grace in his heart and life. Heaven is sal-

vation ultimate, eternal, final, complete, irrevocable. It is the work of grace crowned with glory, the cross of suffering transformed into the crown of rejoicing, the blossom and fruitage of all the anguish and groaning and passion and travail of this earthly life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And they shall reign with Him forever and ever.

And now, unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto our God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

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